Hafa Adai!

VOX POPULI: Anxieties about traveling. PAGE 2

Torres allocates entire $4.7M GEER fund to NMC. PAGE 3

Volume XXX, Issue No. 100
THURSDAY MAY 21, 2020
www.saipantribune.com
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Saipan Tribune

75¢

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

DFEMS RESPONDS TO BRUSH FIRE
The Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services puts out this brush fire that broke out yesterday in Koblerville.
KRIZEL TUAZON

One added to NMI recoveries

By JUSTINE NAUTA
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REPORTER

Another coronavirus case joined the list of recoveries yesterday, raising the CNMI's total number of recoveries to 13.

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. declined to release more details about the person who has recovered, citing privacy laws, but press secretary Kevin Bautista said that patients are reassessed and evaluated by CHCC's medi-

See ONE on Page 4

AT A GLANCE

As of 6pm, May 20, 2020

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	154	0	154
Recovered	126	0	126
Active	25	0	25
Deaths	6*	0	6*

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	21	0	21
Recovered	12	1	13
Active	6	0	6
Deaths	2	0	2
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested**			3,817

*Total includes a sailor from the USS *Theodore Roosevelt.*

**Total count is the number of persons tested on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Health Care Corp.

CUC cuts power to casino

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. cut electric power to the casino in Garapan and at Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC's office at Vestcor on Capital Hill on Tuesday for non-payment of bills.

Power will be reconnected after IPI pays its bill, said CUC Gary P. Camacho yesterday. He refused to elaborate, saying it's a customer's privacy matter.

IPI confirmed the disconnection but stated it was scheduled to be reconnected yesterday, Wednesday. IPI did not indicate how much

See CUC on Page 4

SEDC abolished; advisers' council created

By IVA MAURIN
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REPORTER

The Strategic Economic Development Council has been abolished and the Governor's Council of Economic Advisers was created in its place.

In an executive order yesterday, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres placed the council within the Executive Branch, with an advisory role to the governor. It is tasked to formulate policy initiatives to encourage economic growth in the CNMI, provide for the management

See SEDC on Page 4

Photo shows a Shell Marianas gas station on Saipan. Shell increased its gas prices yesterday.
KIMBERLY BAUTISTA

2nd gas price hike in a month

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

The CNMI saw its second gas price hike in a month last Tuesday, making it the second gas price hike this year.

In just two weeks, gas prices went up by another 15 cents, starting with Mobil Oil Mariana Islands Inc., which raised its prices last Tuesday; Shell Marianas followed suit on Wednesday.

Gas prices went up from $3.23 for a gallon of Extra fuel to $3.38 per gallon, while the Supreme fuel went from $3.71 per gallon to $3.76.

The upward trend in gas prices is being seen worldwide as countries slowly start to reopen their economies and lockdowns are lifted.

In San Diego in the United States, gas prices went up for

See GAS on Page 4

INSIDE

NATION
Doctors are being recruited to go on TV to prescribe opening the U.S. economy as quickly as possible.
PAGE 12

ASIA
Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen is inaugurated after being reelected by a landslide last year.
PAGE 13

LIFE & STYLE
x Gerard Aflague and his wife, Mary, highlight the culinary traditions of the Marianas in their book.
PAGE 15

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Local

VOX POPULI:

Anxieties about traveling

By CHEVY ALIPIO
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REPORTER

With people cooped up in their homes in the past couple of months due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a pent-up desire to travel once the threat of the coronavirus dissipates. *Saipan Tribune* polled several members of the community about the idea of traveling again once restrictions are lifted.

"No one can be forced to not travel but, given the entire world's situation right now, it's times like these when our common sense plays a significant role in our daily decisions. Traveling for a valid reason such as a need to go back home or a need to get medical attention or need to go back to work/school are acceptable. These are all valid reasons to travel and may be understandable when you're putting yourself and loved ones at risk of getting this virus. However, if it's for leisure purposes, then I hope people are double and triple thinking their decisions thoroughly."

Arianne Cabrera, Koblerville

"I would not travel by June. I still find the situation [to be] unsafe to travel. I also felt that it was too early to start opening flights, but we did so anyway. I just hope we don't come to regret that decision."

Elaine Enriquez, Chalan Kiya

"There is no way that I would travel even if I had the means to do so. I don't want to risk being a carrier of the virus and then pass it on to someone else. I will feel guilty for inevitably being a cause to someone else's suffering. Yet, at the same time, if and only if it *is* an emergency, then I most likely will consider traveling. Otherwise, I would not want to travel in these circumstances."

Genelin Anne Camacho, San Vicente

"The sound of traveling sounds fun, but I still wouldn't want to travel because there are still positive cases of COVID-19. I wouldn't really enjoy the trip if I know I could still get [infected] by the virus. I don't want to risk my health and the people I live with at home. I would rather save more money now and travel when it is actually clear of COVID-19."

Sheena Varias, San Antonio

"As much as I love the sound of being able to travel by June, I still would not make plans to do so. There are still so many positive cases in and out of the island that have yet to be detected. There are also people who are asymptomatic and who could spread the virus to others. I wouldn't want to risk my health because I already have pre-existing conditions that would make things worse if I were to get infected by the virus. I also wouldn't want to put my family and friends at risk. I would honestly just wait until it is safe enough to travel. In that way I could enjoy my trip, rather than be in fear of going out and getting the virus."

Diane Aquino, Koblerville

"If flights have opened up by June, I still wouldn't risk traveling. I wouldn't consider traveling even if the airport opened up to provide service to the public, not because I don't love traveling but because I still feel anxious about the virus. The situation has changed and It's scary out there. I don't have any knowledge about how bad it is if I were to get out there. I still want to keep my safety and health a priority."

Kim Dalupo, Finasisu

"Traveling isn't an option for me even if countries ease their restrictions. Traveling is the only reason why disease has spread throughout. Even if they say it may be safe to go, you can never trust their word simply because they don't know how many people disobeyed the rule of social distancing and people can have the virus and not show any symptoms. Traveling by June is too early. We will be able to travel again someday, but it cannot be an option [right now]."

Angela Barbo, Garapan

"I would not travel even if I [were] able to by June. As an incoming college student, this is a disputed topic since many universities still plan on going face-to-face in fall. I prefer to take online classes, which are safer and more reasonable at this time rather than travel and risk my health. As for traveling on vacation, I would hold off until matters subside. Easing restrictions on travel will open up new problems that would not help our current COVID-19 situation. This could lead to further spread of the disease that we are trying to contain. Even if we are restrained from doing certain activities, we need to understand that taking safer precautions is better than risking our health.

Kalea Borja, Kagman

"Even if restrictions are eased, it still wouldn't be safe for us to be out there. There are a huge number of people who have not been tested yet. I'll only want to be traveling once it is 100% safe. Since restrictions are eased, I feel like the countries will be more vulnerable. Everyone should still play it safe."

Ronel Ocanada, San Roque

"If I [were] able to travel by June, then I would. Only because I'm originally from Guam, therefore I have more family there. I feel, though, as if our flights were opened up too early. Yes, there weren't any more positive cases but it was only a matter of time for the flights to bring in more. I do admire the fact that we've contained the cases to 21 rather than what was expected (roughly 3,000). Keep up the good work, Saipan!"

Leani Otiwii, Tanapag

See VOX on Page 4

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Torres allocates entire $4.7M GEER fund to NMC

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres allocated the entirety of the Governor's Emergency Education Relief fund received from the CARES Act to the Northern Marianas College to help pay employee salaries.

Torres, backed by Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, awarded the entire $4.78 million they received from the Education Stabilization fund under the CARES Act to NMC on Tuesday.

According to Torres, NMC deserves the funding for its leadership, support for the administration, and because of all the challenges it has faced as an institution.

"I believe in their leadership, and I believe that the $4.7 million is going to go a long way, with all the challenges that NMC has gone through and all the support they have given to the administration. …I got swabbed a couple of times and the comfort of being swabbed by NMC graduates from its Nursing Program is a comfort for me and you just look at the programs itself, the leadership, the $4.7 million is well deserved," he said.

Palacios echoed Torres, adding that the administration wishes they could give more. "But we'll do what we can to give you what you…deserve," Palacios said.

According to NMC interim president Frankie Eliptico, the $4.7 million would go to salaries as well as its many educational programs. "The funding is really going to help us continue the college's mission of workforce development, academic training, and building capacity for the CNMI. The funding from the governor allows us to pay some salary expenses to avoid any severe austerity measures and allow the college to continue its programs throughout the summer and especially the fall," he said.

"Our enrollment is very strong right now and we have a lot of students who are here and came from the states because their colleges were closed so we want to make sure that they have a college here for them to go to in the new semester and this funding helps us do that," Eliptico added.

Torres said he and Palacios decided to allocate the GEER Fund to NMC because the Public School System was given its own $23 million-plus under the Education Stabilization Fund, significantly more than what was allocated to NMC.

"This here is funding that the governor and the lieutenant governor have the discretion and so we're taking the full $4.7 million and putting it toward NMC," Torres explained.

Eliptico said that NMC already received $1.8 million from the CARES Act; that money was divided into two parts: student aid and to assist NMC in transitioning into online education.

"Over $900,000 was given to us as a past-through for the students. We needed to provide that in direct student aid. Over $700,000 was distributed to students in the spring semester. The remaining $180,000-plus will be distributed according to need. So, for example, we're going to determine some of our students who may have lost their jobs, we're looking to see if they're supporting families, we're looking to see what other hardships they have to make that determination of need. The remaining, or the other half of the $1.8 million, was restricted to online migration of our classes," he said.

EVMF does 'biggest' relief distribution

KRIZEL TUAZON

People on foot line up at the Garapan Central Park's Roundhouse during the Empty Vessel Ministry Foundation's relief distribution on Tuesday. The foundation also did a drive-thru distribution.

Empty Vessel Ministry Foundation gave away about 1,000 bags of food packages last Tuesday at the Garapan Central Park's Roundhouse to members of the community in need of food since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The food distribution, which EVMF describes as its biggest relief distribution to date, was the non-profit organization's fourth such activity so far.

The food packages include 10 lbs of rice, a box of cereal, milk, two cans of processed meat, and a jar of peanut butter.

"This was our largest distribution to date and we would like to help everybody," said EVMF president Rosalyn Ajoste.

Donors of the latest distribution include First Hawaiian Bank, the Kagman High School Prom Committee and Senior Class, and TanHoldings Corp. CEO Jerry Tan and the TSL Foundation.

According to Ajoste, they have given food packages to small communities like Chinese asylum seekers, the CNMI hemodialysis unit, and clients of the Center for Independent Living.

"I would like to thank our donors for their generosity and for opening their hearts to the community," said Ajoste "Empty Vessel is here to be the hands and feet of Jesus of the community to reach out to those who are most vulnerable. Our volunteers are all in good spirits. We all have faith that the Lord will provide."

The Empty Vessel Ministry Foundation is still seeking help with their operations. "We are praying if there are big-hearted donors who can contribute to our organization to help us with our operations cost, utilities, and communications," Ajoste said.

For updates, you can check their Facebook page or you could call them at 483-0162. ***(Chevy Alipio)***

Ex-cop gets 5-day prison term for beating boy for watching porn

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Camacho

A former police officer charged with beating a 13-year-old boy for watching a porn pleaded guilty yesterday in the Superior Court and was slapped with a five-day prison sentence.

Juan Roligat Limes, 48, pleaded guilty to assault and battery.

At the hearing held in the Supreme Court's courtroom, Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho sentenced Limes to one year imprisonment, all suspended except for five days. Limes was given credit for five days of time served. This means he will no longer serve jail time but was also ordered to pay a $200 fine, which may be converted to community service, $25 in court costs, and $120 in probation fee.

Limes was placed on 12 months of supervised probation and required to complete 40 hours of community service. He was also required to complete anger management and parenting classes at the Community Guidance Center.

The Office of the Attorney General had charged Limes with assault and battery last April 20. If he had gone to trial and been convicted, he would have faced a possible maximum sentence of one year imprisonment.

According to the plea deal, Limes beat up the boy on April 7, 2020, on Saipan. According to police detective Rosa T. Rios in her report, it was the boy's stepmother who filed the complaint after she witnessed Limes beating up the child. The boy, who had bruises on the face at that time, was taken to the hospital for evaluation as he complained of headache and numbness in the head and face. The complainant said she saw Limes repeatedly slapping and punching the boy. She then pushed Limes away, then the boy ran behind her. Limes continued throwing punches at the boy. The complainant said Limes claimed that he was upset after he caught the boy watching porn.

Assistant public defender Vina Seelam served as counsel for Limes. Assistant attorney general Erin Toolan appeared for the government.

In April 2006, then-associate judge Juan T. Lizama sentenced Limes to 20 days in prison for beating up his wife and another woman in two separate incidents on Christmas Eve of 2004. When the incidents happened, Limes was an off-duty police detective, according to court records.

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Cyclist involved in auto collision now stable

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

A cyclist with the Triathlon Association of the CNMI who was involved in an auto collision during a routine bike ride last Sunday morning is now in stable condition at the Commonwealth Health Center.

According to members of the Triathlon Association of the CNMI, the accident happened early Sunday morning along Puerto Rico Road sometime around 6am during a routine group bike ride.

Members of the association who participated in the ride last Sunday said that Florence Antonio was riding outside the lane and that the driver of the vehicle was driving at a high speed before colliding with the cyclist.

TRAC members also said that when Antonio was brought to CHC Emergency Room, he was in critical condition but was reportedly stable as of yesterday.

Department of Public Safety spokesperson Dre Pangelinan confirmed that the incident was not a hit-and-run case and that the car's driver stayed with Antonio until police arrived.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

Star Marianas not requiring health screening doc

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Star Marianas Air Inc. said yesterday that they are not requiring interisland passengers to present a health screening document before boarding, which contradicts an earlier statement from the Office of the Governor.

Star Marianas clarified that they have been seeing announcements in various social media posts that they are requiring a health screening certificate for all passengers traveling interisland when their limited scheduled flight service resumes tomorrow, Friday.

"For clarification, the airline has no such requirement," Star Marianas said in their Facebook account.

This contradicts a press release yesterday by the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., which outlines procedures for outgoing and incoming travelers for the CNMI.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

ONE

From Page 1

cal team while they're in isolation before being listed as recovered.

He also pointed out that people who recover from coronavirus infection could still be re-infected. "People who are tested and have a negative result are still vulnerable to the virus," he added.

CHCC chief executive officer Esther Muña also cautioned that an individual who had been isolated and recovers doesn't mean that may now walk freely in the community because they might think that they won›t be getting the virus anymore.

"The bottom line is, when people are recovered, they're released," said Muña. "You can't imprison them forever."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends continuing wearing face masks to protect not only yourself, but everyone else in the community.

To date, the CNMI has a total of 21 confirmed coronavirus cases, with 13 recoveries, six active cases, and two deaths.

Hospital services

CHCC recently announced that some hospital services have reopened, and that new and improved processes for speedy check-in and signages have been put in place throughout the Commonwealth Health Center to ensure proper social distancing.

Some modifications to services include:

■ Elective or non-emergency surgeries for patients are being scheduled.

■ Testing requests for outbound travelers which may need lab-certification for entry to their destination are available at the Medical Care and Treatment Site #13 on the CHCC upper level by appointment only.

■ Children's Clinic and Family Care Clinic have expanded services to include tele-visits using video chat or phone calls.

■ Check-in kiosks for Children's Clinic and Family Care Clinic allow for speedy check-in and social distancing, and each kiosk self-disinfects using UV light after each use.

Additionally, entrances to the hospital will remain limited, and screening upon entry, including temperature checks, will continue.

For hospitalizations, CHC is only allowing one visitor per patient each hour between 9am to 11am and 3pm to 5pm. Patients and visitors will be asked to wear masks, which can be provided if needed.

Other CHC rules

■ One partner allowed for labor/delivery patients. Visitors rules apply after delivery (one visitor per patient between 9am to 11am and 3pm to 5pm)

■ One parent or caregiver will be allowed for pediatric patients. Parent or will be allowed to leave the room or be replaced by another person.

■ For family of patients at end-of-life care, visiting hours may be adjusted and will be cleared by screeners.

Visitors rules are subject to change.

"CHCC would like to assure the community that it is taking every precaution to ensure that each of its facilities are safe and healthy environments for patients. Patients are urged to continue to seek regular health care services, including primary care of chronic conditions and any urgent care needed," said a CHCC statement.

COVID-19 in Guam

The Department of Public Health and Social Services tested 28 individuals for COVID-19 yesterday and all 28 tested negative.

To date, there have been 154 cases confirmed cases in Guam, with six deaths and 126 released from isolation.

Cases are released from isolation under the following conditions: resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms and negative results from two consecutive respiratory specimens collected at least 24 hours apart.

Cases that test positive for COVID-19 through follow-up testing return to active isolation. All remaining cases are in isolation.

SEDC

From Page 1

of the economy, and eliminate barriers for business development and growth.

Torres named late yesterday the 14 members of the council, with TanHoldings chief executive officer Jerry Tan as the designated chairman. The other members of the council are Sen. Frank S. Borja (R-Tinian), Rep. Ivan A. Blanco (R-Saipan), Michael S. Sablan, Roman "Bo" T. Palacios, Matthew Deleon Guerrero, Masato Tezuka, Alex Sablan, Joe C. Guerrero, Don J. Power, Marcie M. Tomokane, Alex B.K. Youn, Aubry Hocog, and Gary Sword. The appointments do not require the advice and consent of the Legislature.

All appointees will serve on the council without pay. An executive director, who will be responsible for running the council, will also be appointed and shall not be paid.

Speaking on the radio yesterday, the governor said that he had a preliminary meeting with his Economic Recovery team last Monday to set the framework on the work that the council will have to do. "Some of the discussion that was done on Monday was, [for the] advisory council to look at opportunities and into what is available out there, under the CARES Act and other stimulus funds. …I look forward to them maximizing all the opportunities," he added.

The council will also give recommendations to the governor on issues relating to the administration of the Executive Branch and its departments and agencies, and will help the Office of Planning and Development in creating the CNMI Comprehensive Sustainable Development Plan.

The council will review proposed regulations pertaining to increases in business fees and rules that affect the economy and provide an analysis of their impact on the private sector. It would also advise the governor on the status of the economy and its direction. It will create detailed reports and meet at least once every three months. The governor will provide the council access to department and agency heads. The Office of the Attorney General shall serve on the council as legal counsel and resource for the council's functions.

GAS

From Page 1

the ninth time in just 10 days, while gas prices in Detroit continue to climb. Florida has also seen a significant jump in fuel prices as they work on reopening their economy following a lockdown as a result of COVID-19. Texas saw its first gas increase in two months since the outbreak of COVID-19 back in March.

According to a Saipan motorist who want to be identified only as Joann, she's concerned that gas prices will continue to go up but the economy hasn't even recovered even a little.

"I honestly thought gas prices went down because of COVID-19. Economies haven't even fully recovered. We're just starting to try to recover. What if there's second wave? I just don't agree with gas prices increasing so fast," she said.

A 26-year-old motorist who didn't want to be named said that he feels its only right for gas to go back to normal as the economy continues to regain normalcy.

"I mean, if you think about it, it was going to go up eventually, at least it's still significantly lower than what it was before the pandemic, which was like over $4," he said.

CUC

From Page 1

they owe CUC and for how many months.

Meanwhile, the seven former workers who are suing IPI and its contractor and subcontractor over injuries they allegedly suffered at the IPI's casino/resort project, informed the U.S. District Court for the NMI Tuesday that IPI persists in disobeying court orders and are stonewalling them, causing discovery to move backward on many fronts.

As of press time yesterday, *Saipan Tribune* was still waiting for a response from IPI about the workers' allegations.

In their status report, the seven former workers, through counsel Aaron Halegua, said that IPI violated the court's sanctions order with its failure to meet the April 20, 2020, deadline to submit some documents, failure to file certification of compliance, failure to produce data from eight company phones, and failure to produce separation dates for IPI employees.

Halegua said IPI failed to produce corporate emails, never produced any ACONEX data, and failed to produce bank records. He said IPI persists in "nonchalantly disobeying the court's orders and showing zero respect for its authority."

The lawyer said the court has already awarded plaintiffs' attorneys' fees twice, held IPI in contempt, and threatened a penalty of $2,000 per day if it failed to comply. "Monetary sanctions clearly will not induce compliance by IPI," said Halegua as he asked the court to issue a default judgment against IPI.

Halegua asked the court, to order IPI, among other things, to send a check or make a bank transfer of $42,000 to plaintiffs, and produce electronic versions of its corporate bank records for all of 2015 to 2017 within 24 hours.

Halegua said IPI should be ordered to pay $2,000 per day to the court from April 30, 2020, and pay plaintiffs' attorneys fees in costs caused by its disobedience of the court's discovery orders.

Halegua asked the court to award plaintiffs attorneys' fees.

The plaintiffs, who are now based in China, are suing IPI and its contractor, MCC International Saipan Ltd. Co., and subcontractor, Gold Mantis Construction Decoration (CNMI) LLC, over the alleged injuries they suffered during accidents at the worksite of IPI's casino/resort project in Garapan.

The plaintiffs alleged, among other things, that they were forced to work long hours for below minimum wage under extremely dangerous conditions at the casino-resort worksite.

In its response to the lawsuit, IPI said any wage claims by the plaintiffs are barred because they voluntarily illegally entered the CNMI to work.

VOX

From Page 2

"Since other countries are starting to ease the restriction when it comes to traveling, if I were able to do so by June, I'd wouldn't take the chance. I feel like it would be another level of risk or another level of exposure because of the virus. Even if by then it has died down, I would give it a longer time to actually settle down because, with all the people traveling, there [is] likely a chance one person may have it and can be passed on through many people.

Raine Avelino, Gualo Rai

"If I [were] able to travel, I feel like I wouldn't risk it. As much as traveling is fun and exciting, if I happen to get infected from my travel, I wouldn't want to put my family and friends at risk. I feel like we should still consider taking precautions and avoiding more cases, so that it would be quicker for us to go back to normal."

Khristelle Itaas, Chalan Kanoa

3 Zoning Board nominees are green-flagged; 2 rejected

By IVA MAURIN
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REPORTER

The Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations Committee approved Tuesday Gov. Ralph DLG Torres' appointments for the Commonwealth Zoning Board except for two, the appointments of Juan Wabol and Lee Dong Kyu.

Wabol's appointment was rejected due to the appointment package being incomplete. Kyu, on the other hand, is a permanent resident and is therefore not eligible to serve as a Zoning Board member. Based on CNMI law, each member of the Zoning Board shall be either of Northern Marianas descent, or be a U.S. citizen or national who has lived in the Commonwealth for a minimum of five consecutive years prior to the selection.

Torres' other appointments include Perry Inos Jr. and Kevin C. Deleon Guerrero, and the reappointment of Joe Ayuyu Jr.

Voting to confirm the appointees will be done at the next delegation session, with May 26 as a deadline, or the nominees will automatically be approved. If confirmed, the new board members will each serve two-year terms.

Reviving the CNMI

At the public hearing, Zoning Board administrator Geraldine dela Cruz endorsed the nominees and highlighted the crucial role Zoning board members play in the CNMI's economic recovery.

"This is very important for a small community like ours. Our trying economic status today…topped with the global pandemic we are battling, indicate the need to join together and pitch into reviving the CNMI," she added.

The seven-member board will create policies and make decisions that will promote the health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community. According to dela Cruz, these are policies and decisions that protect and conserve the value of buildings and support the most appropriate use of land in the CNMI.

During the session, the lawmakers asked the appointees about conflict of interests, overdevelopment, accessibility of zoning services, and the current state of the local economy.

Making it easier for businesses

The appointees, being either business owners or shareholders of family businesses themselves, should already know the processes and obstacles investors normally face in building a business in the CNMI, according to lawmakers.

Rep. Jose Itibus (R-Saipan) pointed out that the appointees, if confirmed, should look into these obstacles and "make it easier for businesses to come in and apply," but quickly clarifying that "easier" does not mean opening up everything to investors.

Sen. Vinnie Sablan (Ind-Saipan), on the other hand, asked that they prioritize the "healthy coexistence" of private dwellings, residential dwellings, business establishments, and the natural resources.

"If confirmed, you will be serving on a very important board, a board that would give us the future outlook of our Commonwealth, of our islands," Sablan said. "Take care of the environment and ensure that things are balanced, the developments are balanced and planned. I'm sure we can get ahead of the curve and welcome back our tourists and visitors so that our businesses can thrive."

No to overdevelopment

Rep. Sheila Babauta (Ind-Saipan) raised the issue of overdevelopment, sharing her experience of having lived in areas outside the CNMI where overdevelopment has pushed the indigenous population out, or into homelessness. The legislator then asked the appointees for their vision of development, and up to what point they consider development to be too much.

Re-appointee Ayuyu said, "The vision is a balance. We definitely want to look at the needs of the developers, the business people, look at the needs of the community. How we can improve our livelihood on the island for the majority of the people."

For Inos, the key is to "stay within our means." The process would include gathering stakeholders, doing research, and identifying the maximum capacity to see what the island can handle, with anything over that cap would constitute overdevelopment.

Deleon Guerrero highlighted the lack of diversification of the CNMI economy, and its overdependence on tourism, citing as an example the hotels on the islands that are now all suffering because of the lack of tourists due to COVID-19.

"We want to encourage other lines of industry that's not tourism-related so we can have a more diverse and more strong economy, so that no matter what hits us we have other stuff to fall back on," he said.

ERRATUM

Saipan Tribune earlier reported that renovation work on the Saipan lighthouse has been suspended, but the contractor that is handling the project clarified that construction work is not suspended but has only been delayed because of the COVID-19 situation. Our apologies for the error.

KRIZEL TUAZON

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LOCAL
DEQ director Masga is CUC's new manager for oil

WWII wrecks endorsed for listing on nat'l history register

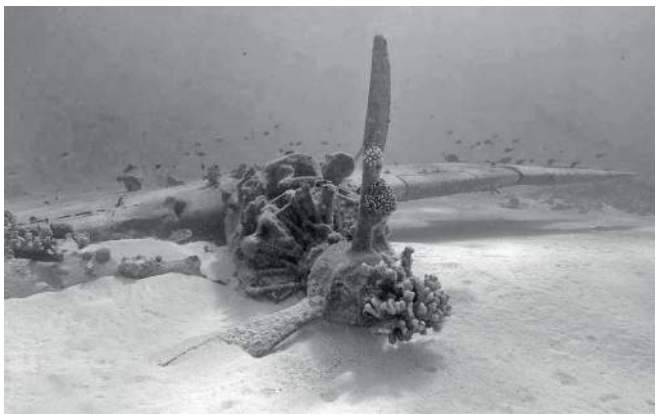
A multiple property National Register of Historic Places nomination for 12 World War II Japanese and U.S. sunken ships, aircraft, and assault vehicles from the battle for Saipan was written by archaeologists and historians under a National Park Service American Battlefield Protection Program grant. These sites are expected to be listed among some of the nation's most treasured historical and cultural resources worthy of preservation.

The National Register is a program of the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. In the CNMI, the Historic Preservation Office administers the program.

The CNMI has close to 40 National Register listings including such diverse historic properties as rock art, Japanese WWII defensive buildings and fortifications, latte stone quarry and sites, and landing beaches.

VALEO FILMS 4

Photo shows a sunken Sherman tank off the Saipan lagoon.



BRETT SEYMOUR/NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Photo shows a sunken Aichi-E13A aircraft on Saipan that is recommended to be listed among some of the nation's most treasured historical and cultural resources worthy of preservation.

Acknowledging the significant role of World War II and its associated heritage globally and its importance and impact to Pacific Islanders locally, Ships of Exploration and Discovery Research and East Carolina University archaeologists and historians are nominating the 12 sites to the National Register, which included a detailed analysis of the sites' history and significance. It was determined after this analysis that the sites qualify for the National Register under two criteria: they are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history, and they have yielded or may be likely to yield information important in history in the areas of engineering, historical archaeology, maritime history, military, and transportation. Special attention was paid to Pacific Islander experiences of World War II and their own words associated with the event and these sites.

The nomination was submitted to the CNMI Historic Preservation Office for review in early May. The process involves a review by the Commonwealth Historic Preservation review board who will make a recommendation to the CNMI Historic Preservation officer, Rita Chong, to accept the nominations. Chong will then make a recommendation to the National Park Service, which makes the final decision on the properties' listing.

There are both social and economic benefits associated with having the submerged sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places. By being included among the listing of resources that have been researched and documented as significant to the national, state, or community, listed properties are given special consideration when the federal government is planning or giving aid to projects. Listing gives the community and public officials credibility when attempting to protect these resources. For the CNMI, these sites are a heritage tourism asset—stimulating the economy through water-related tourism activities—and their protection will ensure they are a sustainable asset over time.

The World War II submerged sites listed are part of the WWII Maritime Heritage Trail: Battle of Saipan (http://blog.ecu.edu/sites/pmht/) and include a Japanese Aichi13A "Jake" floatplane, a Japanese Kawanishi H8K "Emily" seaplane, a U.S. TBM Avenger torpedo bomber plane, a U.S. Martin PBM Mariner seaplane, the Japanese freighter known as "Chinsen," two Japanese Daihatsu landing craft, a possible Japanese submarine chaser, three U.S. Sherman tanks, and a U.S. LVT.

The listings can be accessed for public review at:https://www.dropbox.com/sh/y9d3v63ipfupieuAADu59oFtgOf4o9lQWSmXDWUa?dl=0. Public input is not required, but is welcome and appreciated and can be submitted via the comments box on the WWII Maritime Heritage Trail website here: http://blog.ecu.edu/sites/pmht/visit-the-trail/. If you have thoughts or stories about the sites, feel free to share them and we will incorporate them into the listing where possible. For more information contact: Jennifer McKinnon mckinnonje@ecu.edu. ***(PR)***

Deadline nears to apply for emergency food and shelter funds

The CNMI has been awarded federal funds made available through the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency under the Emergency Food and Shelter Program national board program.

The NMI has been chosen to receive $77,220 in annual Phase 37 funding, plus an additional $101,400 to support emergency COVID-19 relief efforts to supplement emergency food and shelter programs in the Commonwealth.

The selection was made by a national board that is chaired by FEMA and consists of representatives from the American Red Cross; Catholic Charities, USA; National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA; The Jewish Federations of North America, The Salvation Army; and, United Way Worldwide.

The NMI Local Board will determine how the funds awarded to the CNMI are to be distributed among the emergency food and shelter programs run by local service agencies.

Under the terms of the grant from the national board, local agencies chosen to receive funds must: 1) be private voluntary nonprofits or units of government, 2) be eligible to receive Federal funds, 3) have an accounting system, 4) practice nondiscrimination, 5) have demonstrated the capability to deliver emergency food and/or shelter programs, and 6) if they are a private voluntary organization, have a voluntary board. Qualifying agencies are urged to apply.

The CNMI local board has distributed emergency food and shelter funds previously to The Salvation Army, Empty Vessel Ministry Foundation, Karidat Social Services, Division of Youth Services, and the Saipan Mayor's Office. Public or private voluntary agencies interested in applying for Emergency Food and Shelter Program funds should contact John Hirsh at the American Red Cross at 234-3459 for an application.

The deadline for applications to be received via e-mail is May 25. The local board will meet virtually via MS teams on May 27 at 3pm to determine funding allocations. Electronic copies of local agency documents will be distributed prior to the meeting. ***(PR)***

FAQs about Economic Impact Payment or 'stimulus checks'

1. Does someone who is a resident alien qualify for the payment?

A person who is a nonresident alien in 2020 is not eligible for the payment. A person who is a qualifying resident alien with a valid Social Security number is eligible for the payment only if he or she is a qualifying resident alien in 2020 and could not be claimed as a dependent of another taxpayer for 2020. Aliens who received a payment but are not qualifying resident aliens for 2020 should return the payment to the Division of Revenue & Taxation by following the instructions about repayments.

2. Does someone who has died qualify for the payment?

No. A payment made to someone who died before receipt of the payment should be returned to the Division of Revenue & Taxation by following the instructions about repayments. Return the entire payment unless the payment was made to joint filers and one spouse had not died before receipt of the payment, in which case, you only need to return the portion of the payment made on account of the decedent. This amount will be $1,200 unless adjusted gross income exceeded $150,000.

3. Does someone who is incarcerated qualify for the payment?

No. A payment made to someone who is incarcerated should be returned to the Division of Revenue & Taxation by following the instructions about repayments. A person is incarcerated if he or she is described in one or more of clauses (i) through (v) of Section 202(x)(1)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. § 402(x)(1)(A)(i) through (v)). For a payment made with respect to a joint return where only one spouse is incarcerated, you only need to return the portion of the payment made on account of the incarcerated spouse. This amount will be $1,200 unless adjusted gross income exceeded $150,000.

4. What is meant by a valid SSN required for a payment?

A valid SSN for a payment is one that is valid for employment and is issued by the SSA before the due date of your 2019 tax return (including the filing deadline postponement to July 15 and an extension to October 15 if you request it) or your 2018 tax return (including extensions) if you haven't filed your 2019 tax return.

If the individual was a U.S. citizen when they received the SSN, then it is valid for employment. If "Not Valid for Employment" is printed on the individual's Social Security card and the individual's immigration status has changed so that they are now a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, ask the SSA for a new Social Security card. However, if "Valid for Work Only With DHS Authorization" is printed on the individual's Social Security card, the individual has the required SSN only as long as the Department of Homeland Security authorization is valid.

5. I think the amount of my Economic Impact payment is incorrect. What can I do?

Payment amounts vary based on income, filing status and family size. If you filed a 2019 tax return, the Division of Revenue & Taxation used information from it about you, your spouse, your income, filing status and qualifying children to calculate the amount and issue your payment. If you haven't filed your 2019 return or it has not been processed yet, the division used the information from your 2018 return to calculate the amount and issue your Payment. The division is not able to correct or issue additional payments at this time.

If you did not receive the full amount to which you believe you are entitled, you will be able to claim the additional amount when you file your 2020 tax return. This is particularly important for individuals who may be entitled to the additional $500 per qualifying child payments.

A Taxpayer Notice will be mailed to each recipient's last known address within a few weeks after the payment is made. When you file your 2020 tax return next year, you can refer to this notice and claim additional credits on your 2020 tax return if you are eligible for them. The division will provide further details on www.finance.gov.mp on the action they may need to take.

6. What should I do to return an Economic Impact payment?

You should return the payment as described below.

If the payment was a paper check:

1. Write "Void" in the endorsement section on the back of the check.

2. Submit the check to Division of Revenue & Taxation cashier; or drop-box; or mail the voided check immediately to:

Division of Revenue & Taxation
P.O. Box 5234 CHRB,
Saipan, MP 96950

3. Don't staple, bend, or paper clip the check.

4. Include a note stating the reason for returning the check.

If the payment was a paper check and you have cashed it, or if the payment was a direct deposit:

1. Submit a personal check, money order, or make payment by credit card.

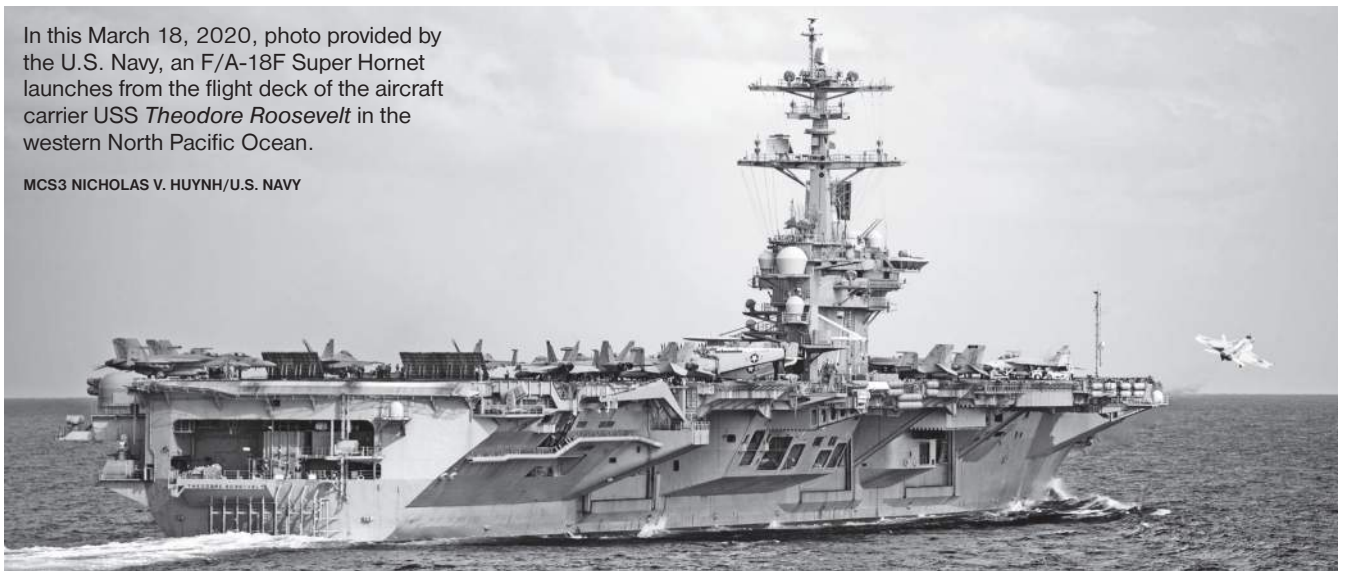
2. If making payment by check or money order, write on the check/money order made payable to "CNMI Treasury." In the memo section, write 2020EIP and the taxpayer identification number (social security number, or individual taxpayer identification number) of the recipient of the check.

3. Include a brief explanation of the reason for returning the EIP.

Source: Office of the Governor

Carrier sidelined by coronavirus heads back to sea this week

By LOLITA C. BALDOR
ASSOCIATED PRESS



In this March 18, 2020, photo provided by the U.S. Navy, an F/A-18F Super Hornet launches from the flight deck of the aircraft carrier USS *Theodore Roosevelt* in the western North Pacific Ocean.

MCS3 NICHOLAS V. HUYNH/U.S. NAVY

WASHINGTON (AP)—The USS *Theodore Roosevelt* will return to sea later this week, nearly two months after the ship was sidelined in Guam with a rapidly growing coronavirus outbreak, U.S. officials said as the crew finished final preparations to depart.

In an interview from the aircraft carrier, Navy Capt. Carlos Sardiello said Monday the ship will sail with a scaled-back crew of about 3,000, leaving about 1,800 sailors on shore who are still in quarantine. Those include up to 14 sailors who recently tested positive again, just days after getting cleared to return to the carrier. The puzzling COVID-19 reappearance in the sailors adds to the difficulty in getting the ship's crew healthy again, and fuels questions about the quality of the testing and just how long sailors may remain infected or contagious.

Sardiello would not discuss timelines or planned operations. But other U.S. officials said the ship is expected to leave in the next few days, and if all goes well it will conduct naval operations in the Pacific region for some period of time before heading home to San Diego. The officials spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss military operations.

Asked about the possibility the ship will be able to conduct missions after its two-month layoff in Guam, Sardiello expressed confidence. "Do I have a crystal ball? I do not. But I think we have set the conditions for a high probability of success, and we're going to go to sea and do our mission," he said.

The *Roosevelt* has been at the center of a widening controversy that led to the firing of the ship's previous captain, the resignation of the Navy secretary and an expanded investigation into what triggered the outbreak and how well top naval commanders handled it. More than 1,000 sailors on the ship have tested positive over the past two months, and the entire crew has had to cycle through quarantine on shore before being allowed to reboard.

Preparing to go back to sea has been an intense process, requiring sailors to go through mandated preparations and training to ensure all the systems are working and that troops are ready despite the added requirements of masks, constant cleaning, social distancing and other virus-related restrictions.

Sardiello said they were able to get special black neck gaitors for the flight deck crew, because wearing regular masks wouldn't be safe. And they've set up one-way corridors, spaced out berthing for the crew members, and are keeping mess halls open longer so fewer sailors are there at any one time.

Once at sea, the crew will conduct carrier qualifications for the flight-deck crew, including fighter jet take-offs and landings. After about two weeks, the carrier plans to return to Guam to pick up healthy sailors who have finished quarantine and then return to sea.

The virus resurgence was a surprise wrinkle.

"We're at the time where expect the unexpected and deal with it. There's no good news. There's no bad news. It's COVID and we don't understand it completely," said Sardiello. "We're executing according to plan to return to sea, and fighting through the virus is a part of that."

As of Monday, 14 sailors had tested positive for a second time, and 30 others who came in contact with them were sent ashore for quarantine. All 14 had previously tested positive for the virus and had gone through at least two weeks of isolation. Before they were allowed to go back to the ship, all had to test negative twice in a row, with the tests separated by at least a day or two.

The sudden reappearance of the virus reflects a broader puzzle for health and science experts. It may suggest that the test wasn't given properly or that the virus wasn't in the nasal passages but was still elsewhere. There also are questions about whether the virus level can sometimes be too low for detection.

Air Traffic Controller 1st Class Daniel Wright said a few sailors who work for him were among those who tested positive again.

"They were obviously discouraged at first," Wright said in an interview from the *Roosevelt*, adding that one sailor had just returned to the ship, had unpacked and was eager to get back to work. "The nice thing is that the majority of them have little to no symptoms at all and are just waiting for that final check in the box with a clean bill of health so they could join the rest of the crew."

Wright said that while things were difficult in the early days of the outbreak, morale is better now as sailors look forward to getting back to sea, wrapping up their deployment and heading home.

"Half the crew would, I'm sure, be happy to just sail straight home to San Diego once we're ready," he said. But he added that this is some sailors' first deployment and some sailors' last, so "to be able to finish something that they started back in January—it's a good milestone for all of us to shoot for."

After the outbreak was discovered and the ship docked in Guam, more than 4,000 crew members went ashore for testing and quarantine, while about 800 remained on the ship to protect and run the high-tech systems, including the nuclear reactors that run the vessel.

In recent weeks, sailors were methodically brought back on board, while the others who had remained went ashore for quarantine.

Sardiello, a former *Roosevelt* captain, was abruptly sent back to the ship in early April to take command after Capt. Brett Crozier was fired for urging his commanders to take faster action to stem the virus outbreak onboard.

After a preliminary review last month, Adm. Mike Gilday, the Navy's top officer, recommended that Crozier be reinstated as ship captain. But the Navy decided to conduct the broader investigation.

That review, which effectively delays a decision on Crozier's reinstatement, is supposed to be done by the end of the month.

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
RFP NO.: RFP20-OGM-070

SUBMISSION DATE: JUNE 22, 2020 TIME: 09:30 A.M.

"2020 MAINTENANCE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM EMERGENCY RESPONDER RADIO REPEATER SYSTEM FOR THE MUNICIPALITY OF ROTA A PROJECT UNDER THE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR, OFFICE OF GRANTS MANAGEMENT & STATE CLEARINGHOUSE"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENCION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS. ****MUST USE A FACE MASK BEFORE ENTERING THE OFFICE****

A **PRE-BID MEETING** WILL BE HELD AT THE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ROOM ON **JUNE 08, 2020 AT 10:00 A.M., LOCAL TIME**.
****ALL PARTICIPANTS/ATTENDEES ARE REQUIRED TO USE A FACE MASK AND EXERCISE SOCIAL DISTANCING FOR THE DURATION OF THE MEETING****

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS RFP MUST BE SUBMITTED IN WRITING TO **MR.EPIPHANIO E. CABRERA, JR., ADMINISTRATOR**, VIA E-MAIL TO epi.cabrera@gov.mp **NO LATER THAN THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS JUNE 11, 2020**.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGH.T TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ EPIPHANIO E. CABRERA, JR.
ADMINISTRATOR, OFFICE OF GRANTS

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB20-DFEMS-071

SUBMISSION DATE: JUNE 04, 2020 TIME: 09:30 A.M.

"DFEMS WEBSITE AND EMAIL HOSTING FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENCION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS. ****MUST USE A FACE MASK BEFORE ENTERING THE OFFICE****

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THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ DENNIS C. MENDIOLA
COMMISSIONER, DFEMS

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, P&S

OMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT PROGRAM DR-4235, 4396, 4404-MP
PRE-DISASTER MITIGATION PROGRAM
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
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ADDENDUM NO. 1
5/12/20
ITB20-GOV-064

The following is a revision from the Invitation to Bid announcement and Instruction to Bidders. All others remain the same.

1. The pre-bid meeting has been rescheduled from **March 16, 2020 to May 20, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. at the Governor's Conference Room**. Each proposed bidder may schedule a time on **May 21, 2020** with Ms. Tiana Reyes for the **site inspection with a limit of two (2) people per company due to COVID-19 social distancing**. The deadline for questions concerning this project has been rescheduled from **March 19, 2020 to May 26, 2020**.

- There will be a pre-bid conference for this project on **Wednesday, May 20, 2020 10:00 am ChST** at the Governor's Conference Room located at the Office of the Governor, Capitol Hill, Saipan. Questions concerning this project shall be directed to Ms. Tiana Reyes in writing by e-mail to treyes@omb.gov.mp or fax to (670) 664-2408 on or before **Tuesday, May 26, 2020**. All responses to inquiries will be shared with all prospective bidders.

2. The bid submission date and bid opening has been rescheduled from **April 2, 2020 to June 9, 2020 for on-island bidders** and from **April 15, 2020 to June 18, 2020 for off-island bidders**. For off-island bidders, the date to submit a Notice of Intent to Bid has been rescheduled from **April 2, 2020 to June 9, 2020**.

- Sealed bids must be marked **ITB20-GOV-064 Supply and Installation of Desk Cubicles for the Office of Management and Budget, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and Capital Improvement Program**. For bidders within the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply located at the former Emergency Management Office, Building No. 1301, Ascencion Drive, Capitol Hill on Saipan no later than **10:00 a.m. ChST June 9, 2020**. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to Bid. Notices of Intent to Bid must be received by the Director of Procurement & Supply no later than **10:00 a.m. ChST June 9, 2020** and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to a.magofna@dof.gov.mp. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than **June 9, 2020** and mailed to the **Director of Procurement and Supply at P.O. BOX 510008 C.K., Saipan MP, 96950** and the bid documents must be received no later than June 18, 2020. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.
- Bids will be publicly open and read at the Division of Procurement and Supply located at the former Emergency Management Office, Building No. 1301, Ascencion Drive, Capitol Hill on Saipan at **10:00 a.m. ChST, June 18, 2020**. However, if no notices of intent to bid are received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be open at **10:00 a.m. ChST, June 9, 2020**.

END OF ADDENDUM NO. 1

Opinion

Hafa Adai
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXX, Issue No. 100

Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

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The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Why churches, for now, should remain closed

A reader emailed us a question that people have been asking: Under Illinois' shutdown order, why is it OK to go to the grocery store or Walmart, but it's not OK to go to church?

"Both are big buildings that have a lot of people in them. What's the science behind this? Maybe if there was more reporting on the 'why,' folks would understand and perhaps follow the guidelines," the reader wrote.

We'll give it a shot: While we don't have all the answers, we support Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot's decision to hold off on church services for now. One reason? Lessons learned from the Mount Vernon, Wash., choir outbreak earlier this year where 53 choir members became sick and two died. One symptomatic person attended a rehearsal and likely sickened the rest. A published Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report on the outbreak determined that the act of singing—vocal cords that push droplets into the air—caused the coronavirus to spread more than it would in other spaces, such as a grocery store. Unless there's an outbreak of singing at your local supermarket. Which we doubt.

Some religious services also involve handshaking, breaking of bread, shared holy water, Bible school and preaching, all within the confines of a church—not all buildings are spacious—for an hour or longer. Even under social distancing rules and facial coverings, the closeness and traditions of a religious service can make it riskier than a trip to the store.

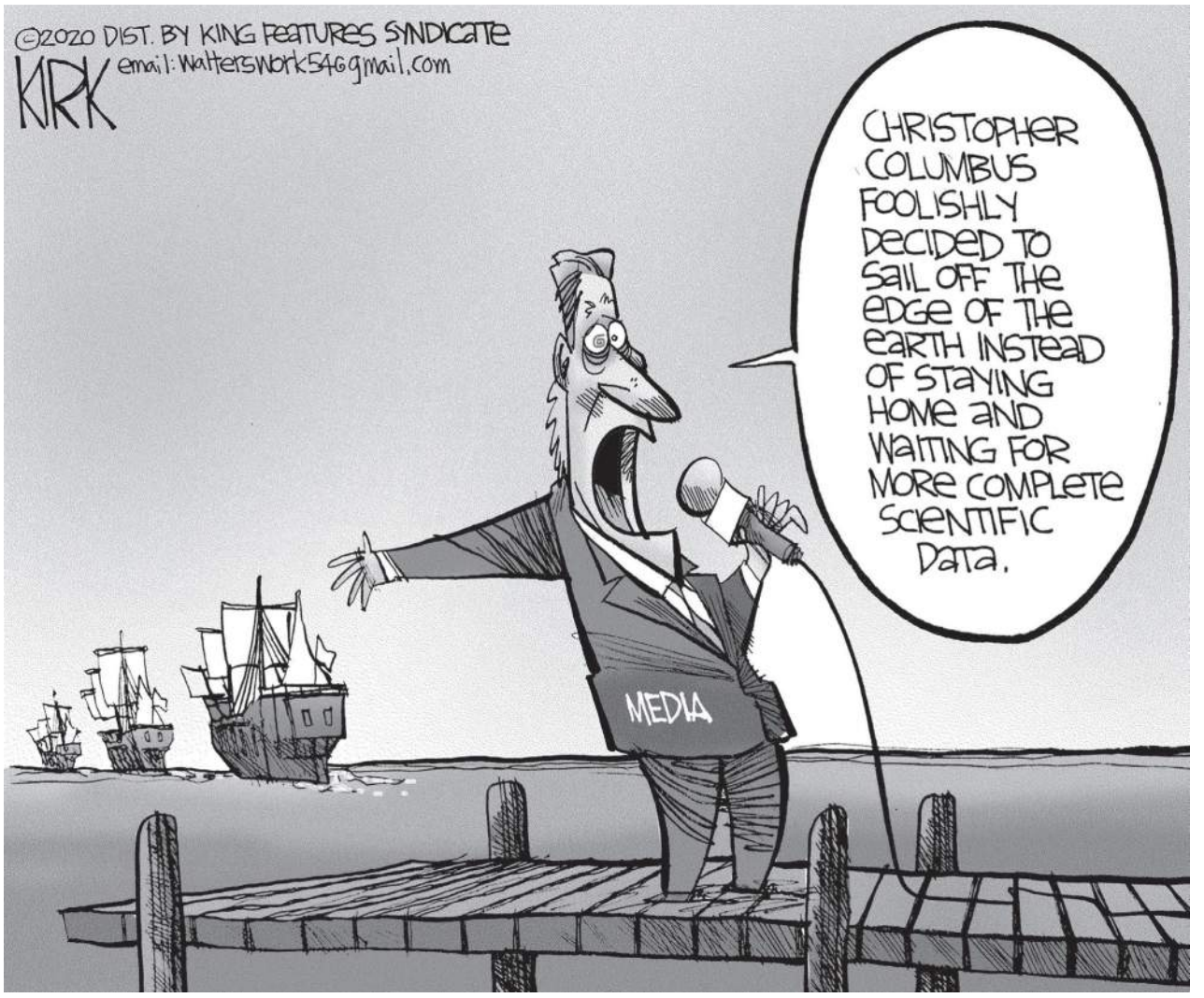
That's the situation today. It doesn't mean churches should remain closed in two weeks or two months. Cases of infection statewide and diligence on social distancing may well justify a slow reopening of religious services sooner. Cardinal Blase Cupich of the Chicago Archdiocese, for example, recently unveiled a phased approach to restarting Mass. The first step would allow for small gatherings for baptisms, funerals and weddings.

Rather than openly defy stay-home orders, Cupich worked with Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker's office and health officials to establish guidelines. He also rightly emphasized to parishioners that restrictions due to public health should not be equated with restrictions on religious liberty.

Churches that hold services of any type in defiance of state and city orders could face fines, Mayor Lightfoot said Monday. But anything beyond that, which would divert city and police resources to punish violators, would be an overreach of government. Civil disobedience should not be met with an aggressive police response.

It's understandable that faith-based citizens facing this pandemic feel particularly frustrated and vulnerable, separated from the very moorings that keep them steady and hopeful. But there are specific health reasons behind the limitations. They won't last forever.

(c)2020 *Chicago Tribune*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email: Wattersworks46@gmail.com
CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS FOOLISHLY DECIDED TO SAIL OFF THE EDGE OF THE EARTH INSTEAD OF STAYING HOME AND WAITING FOR MORE COMPLETE SCIENTIFIC DATA.
MEDIA

Going nowhere

By DAWN MARGARET S. SABLAN
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

These last few weeks of staying home to "stay safe" to prevent us from being infected by the coronavirus has been difficult. From not being able to go out to socialize, go grocery shopping, and even going into work has proven difficult for the most of us. Being immobilized because of a looming virus omnipresence is tough. Wanting to be out there but having to stay home because it is "safer" for us is a difficult concept to grasp. Most of us are having a hard time and it has just been a few weeks. Imagine living your entire life like that. In a world without assistive technologies like wheelchairs, hearing aids, glasses, and many others, people with disabilities would be living that every single day. Inaccessibility is a topic that has been dismissed because most people do not know how it feels to not have things accessible.

For those who use wheelchairs, inaccessibility is a constant battle, from not fitting in the correct wheelchair to having to figure out how to maneuver inaccessible access ways in the community. Individuals with mobility impairments have been fighting for freedom that we all have. Self-advocates and advocates for people with disabilities have been fighting for transportation, for accessible walkways, for accessible parking spaces, and many other simple joys that we, as people who do not need any assistive devices, take for granted.

For us to understand how inaccessibility affects people with disabilities, we first must understand the different types of assistive technologies and how they assist people who use them. According to the Americans with Disabilities Act, assistive technology is any item, piece of equipment, or product system that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.

Some assistive tech or device we see often are wheelchairs, glasses, and hearing aids. A wheelchair is defined as a manually operated or power-driven device designed primarily for use by an individual with a mobility disability for the main purpose of indoor, or of both indoor and outdoor, locomotion. Simply put, a wheelchair helps a person who has trouble moving move.

Squeezing out of a car door when someone else parks way too close or jumping over boxes blocking the aisles of stores seem easy, but imagine what a person who uses a wheelchair goes through when those inconveniences occur, from having to find a new parking spot, which maybe further from the entrance, or having to turn around and find another way to access the aisle. We do not think of this enough, but it still occurs.

It's easy for people without disabilities to take these things for granted, but who is going to help those who really need it? Yes it is easy to ask someone else to do simple things for you, but being free to do them yourself is liberating. A friend of mine shared his experience about how this pandemic is affecting him. It brought him back to the days when he could not do anything because he did not have access to the right technology to help him get day to day things done for himself.

The rise of assistive technology such as the wheelchair opened so many opportunities for people with disabilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act or the ADA, protects the rights of people with disabilities. The ADA was passed in 1990 and it opened the door of access in all areas of life including employment, state and local government services, public accommodations, and telecommunications. Section 3 of the ADA protects the rights of people with disabilities in public places. Places that offer its services to the public need to accommodate people with disabilities. The ADA lays out several rules such as how much space is needed for people who uses wheelchairs would need to get through aisles and other access ways, provide accommodations to those who are visually and hearing impaired, and most commonly seen here, reserving accessible parking spaces for people who need them.

We may not need assistive devices or need to understand any of those laws yet, but the one thing about disabilities is that they never discriminate—everyone one day will likely need an assistive device or care for someone with a disability. So while we are self-isolating at home and wanting to be free again, let us think about accessibility in our community and see how we can help make our community and ourselves more accessible.

For more information about assistive technology, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and accessibility, contact the Northern Marianas Protection & Advocacy Systems, Inc. at (670) 235-7273/4 or visit us on the web at www.nmpasi.org, www.facebook.com/NMPASI, and follow us on Instagram @nmpasi670.

Dawn Margaret S. Sablan is a projects specialist at the Northern Marianas Protection & Advocacy Systems, Inc.

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Vaccine at 'warp speed'? Let's think about it, Mr. President

By JANE M. ORIENT, M.D.
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jane M. Orient, M.D. is executive director of the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons since 1989. She is currently president of Doctors for Disaster Preparedness. She is the editor of AAPS News, *the* Doctors for Disaster Preparedness Newsletter, *and* Civil Defense Perspectives, *and is the managing editor of the Journal of American Physicians and Surgeons.*

The idea of moving at "warp speed" probably resonates with Star Wars fans. A galactic empire is impossible if it takes 100 years for a signal, much less a warship, to move from one system to another at the universal speed limit, 186,000 miles per second, the speed of light

Serious science fiction lovers know that the warp drive does not traverse space at faster-than-light speeds. It warps space, or leaps through another dimension—it takes a massive shortcut.

So, what's the shortcut for vaccine development?

■ Safety testing? It is impossible to test for long-term consequences without observing recipients for a long time—not a few days or weeks. If experts are worrying about long-term effects of having the disease, why not about the vaccine? If one consequence might be a massive immune over-reaction to a later exposure to the coronavirus, we'd need to await another outbreak.

■ Efficacy testing? One way to test for efficacy is to find an animal model. See whether unvaccinated animals get the disease when deliberately exposed, while vaccinated ones are protected. If this works, you still need to test humans: vaccinate one group, give one group a placebo, and see whether a larger proportion of the unvaccinated get sick. Normally, you would wait to see how the subjects fare in the real world, where they might get naturally exposed during their usual activities. This takes time. You could speed this up by giving them all a dose of the virus, which might kill some of them. That would be unethical—wouldn't it?

■ One could test for antibodies, but do they work? Some are asserting that the antibodies that survivors have might not protect them. Why would the vaccine antibodies be better? For one thing, the virus might mutate. Maybe it already has.

Then what about production and distribution?

■ How about sinking hundreds of millions of dollars into producing various vaccine candidates, just in case they work? Then you could just waste it all if they don't.

■ For distribution, why not mobilize the armed forces to quickly vaccinate 300 million people? Our furloughed medical workers might not be up to the job. Might arms be needed if people resist? Incidentally, if everybody gets the vaccine, there's no control group. Doesn't the scientific method call for one?

Why the hurry?

Experts like Tony Fauci and Bill Gates say we cannot go back to work until there's "a vaccine." (Note that they did not say "a safe and effective vaccine.")

In fact, we could go back today—if the government were not stopping us.

One reason for hurry is that the epidemic might be gone, and the vaccinators couldn't take the credit. We have no vaccine for the "Spanish" flu of 1918, the "Asian" flu of 1958, or the "Hong Kong" flu of 1968, all of which killed far more than the current pandemic, and all of which went away. A speedy vaccine, which was developed for the predicted 1976 mass extinction/swine flu pandemic that never was, resulted in deaths and Guillain-Barré syndrome.

Humanity survived many waves of far more deadly pestilence before vaccines. The smallpox vaccine may have finally eliminated smallpox, but smallpox lesions were identified in Egyptian mummies from the 3rd century B.C., but not in earlier or later mummies. It re-emerged in the 6th and 7th centuries A.D., disappeared until the 11th century, then after being almost absent for about 300 years re-emerged in the 15th century.

In 2020, much has happened with amazing speed: the flattening of the economy, the suspension of civil liberties, the destruction of medical practices. Censorship of any information that the World Health Organization doesn't like, for example about potential game-changers like vitamin D and high-dose vitamin C. The declaration of a new drug remdesivir as the "standard of care" after an underwhelming study was prematurely stopped. The sequencing of the coronavirus genome. Revolutionary experimental DNA and RNA vaccine technologies.

Those who were seemingly prescient about the potential of coronavirus—Bill Gates holds a 2015 patent on a coronavirus created with recombinant gene technology, and the Gates Foundation held a crisis simulation modeled on a coronavirus in October 2019—did nothing to shore up preparedness measures such as equipment stockpiles.

Fear spreads at the speed of light. After 70 years and 100 million users of antimalarial drugs with remarkable safety, FDA is inspiring fear of heart problems from using hydroxychloroquine or azithromycin for COVID-10—but don't worry if it's for lupus, rheumatoid arthritis, or malaria.

We need an immediate return to letting doctors practice and letting people work. They need accurate information, so they can make prudent decisions about protecting themselves and their loved ones. We need an immediate end to the dictatorial influence of a few long-entrenched "experts" or media giants, and investigations of conflicts of interest with all deliberate speed.

What we do not need is panic-inspired warping of safety testing.

Can we trust cruise ships, airlines to protect the traveling public from coronavirus?

By FABIOLA SANTIAGO
Miami Herald

Fabiola Santiago is a columnist for the Miami Herald. *Readers may email her at fsantiago@miamiherald.com.*

Reopening fever is being peddled as the antidote to cabin fever, a major side effect of the coronavirus quarantine.

Travelers are eager to get back on the road again.

By sea. By air. By car.

But the novel coronavirus is still with us—and spreading.

That's a fact, easily proven by the numbers of confirmed cases of the infected and deaths, still on the upswing.

Then, there's the matter of travel industry track record.

Are you ready to sail again with a cruise line that told travelers it was safe when the highly contagious coronavirus was spreading in Florida and worldwide—and it clearly wasn't?

Their action and inaction caused illness and deaths, a Miami Herald investigation concluded.

NO REFUND COVID CRUISES

With the virus spreading in Florida and worldwide, companies refused to cancel sailings, telling people that if they didn't carry through with travel booked when the world was quite different, they wouldn't get their money back.

Trusting people, fearful people innocently boarded.

Miami-based Carnival Corp.'s Diamond Princess ship became the source of the largest COVID-19 outbreak outside China, which was then, in mid-February, the pandemic's epicenter.

But that didn't end the sailings.

Carnival and its competitors, Royal Caribbean, Norwegian Cruise Line and MSC Cruises, continued to operate until March 13 despite outbreaks and suspected infections on their ships making headlines.

AIRLINE PROMISES SAFETY, FLIES PACKED

Ditto for airlines.

Are you ready to fly again with an airline, United, that promises safety measures like social distancing between passengers to lure you—and then flies a packed plane from New York to San Francisco, sardine-style as usual?

We know this thanks to a cardiologist, who had been treating COVID-19 patients in New York, who was flying home and took a selfie with the plane's packed cabin behind him.

I'm not ready for the false promise of coronavirus-safe cruising.

I'm not ready for bait-and-switch on safety.

You shouldn't be, either.

Better to deal with cabin fever than returning home to a waiting ambulance gurney or in a body bag.

Cruise ships and airlines, vital to Florida's tourism-driven economy, have a long road to travel to earn back consumer trust.

Like every other Florida consumer with canceled sailing plans for this year due to the coronavirus, I'm carefully considering whether I will cruise again in the near future—or not at all for a long, long time.

Weighing heavily on my decision is the misbehavior of principal actors in the cruise line industry during the coronavirus crisis and other past ills, like dumping oil and waste in the oceans.

Companies ignored warnings about the spread of coronavirus and misled workers and travelers about the level of safety.

They only canceled sailings the day before the U.S. government announced they would be docked because they knew the ban was coming from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Cruise lines aren't responsible for the novel coronavirus, of course, but the executives who run the companies are responsible for their failed response (or lack of one) to the highly contagious disease.

They know places where people congregate are incubators and that ships carrying thousands of passengers are fertile petri dishes for germs. They had plenty of practice with the norovirus outbreaks of vomiting and diarrhea on ships in previous years.

Their mishandling of COVID-19 harmed travelers and employees.

Images of people who boarded as happy tourists and disembarked at PortMiami on April 4 from the Coral Princess as corpses in body bags are scenes we won't soon forget.

Neither is the video of ambulances rushing away with sick passengers and of others trapped inside their cabins telling the story of their ordeal, traveling from port to port without a certain destination.

WRONG COURSE OF ACTION

Last week there were crew members stuck on the Royal Caribbean *Navigator of the Seas* in confinement—Romanians so desperate to get home that they're staging a hunger strike and have gone more than 72 hours without food.

That's the same ship I was supposed to sail to the Bahamas this June.

I'm doubly repulsed at the treatment these workers were getting when I look at my travel documents.

The cruise lines are sailing these pandemic days from one disastrous situation to another.

Surely, the pandemic put them on the course, but their mishandling of the crisis is what keeps them there instead of on the way to economic and reputation recovery.

The people who run them don't seem to learn a thing.

Congress is investigating and rightfully insisting on strict regulations before they're allowed to sail.

Can we trust cruise ships and airlines to protect the traveling public from becoming exposed to the coronavirus?

Evidence of bad behavior points to no.

Too bad for Florida, which needs them to succeed. Too bad for those of us who can't imagine a world without safe travels.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Thank you

Kagman High's Senior Graduation Committee would like to give recognition to the following business: Success International, Aqua Resort Club, Laolao Bay Golf Resort, Kensington, Megabyte, Modern Office Supply, Pacifica Insurance, and Marianas Insurance.

Thank you for donating funds toward the Kagman High graduation ceremony we would have had. Despite not having an actual ceremony due to COVID-19, these funds are still dedicated to making sure each Kagman High School senior is celebrated for all their hard work, even more so during these trying times. It means the world to us what your generosity has enabled us to do. For that, we thank you.

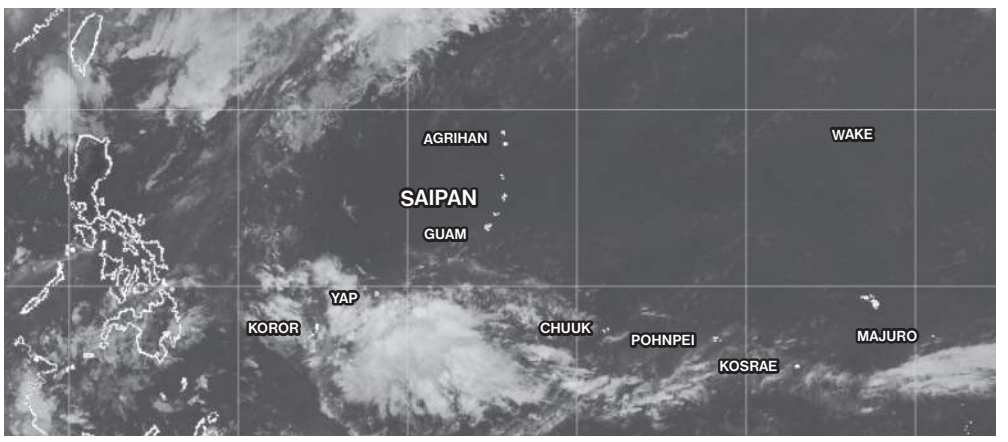
Leila Staffler M.S. Ed.
Principal, Kagman High School

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
89° 79°	89° 79°	89° 79°	89° 79°	89° 79°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 7:22 AM, WEDNESDAY, MAY 20, 2020

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Isolated showers and east trade-winds prevail across the Marianas this morning. A dry and tranquil weather pattern is expected through the coming weekend.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

FLIGHT SCHEDULE

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:15am	9:55am	1, 4, 6

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	7:30am	8:11am	1, 4, 6

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Mostly Sunny	88° / 80°
Palau	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Yap	Thunderstorms	87° / 80°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	87° / 81°
Pohnpei	Showers	85° / 80°
Kosrae	Showers	85° / 79°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	85° / 81°

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Sunny	63° / 50°
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	86° / 61°
Hong Kong	Thunderstorms	88° / 81°
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	84° / 73°
London	Thunderstorms	77° / 59°
Los Angeles	Sunny	82° / 60°
Manila	Thunderstorms	93° / 82°
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	55° / 48°
Miami	Thunderstorms	84° / 77°
New York	Partly Cloudy	65° / 52°
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	77° / 64°
Paris	Partly Cloudy	84° / 63°
Busan	Partly Cloudy	64° / 55°
Rome	Thunderstorms	75° / 63°
Salem	Partly Cloudy	82° / 62°
San Francisco	Sunny	63° / 51°
Seoul	Mostly Cloudy	73° / 57°
Tokyo	Showers	70° / 61°
Washington, DC	Cloudy	68° / 57°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	5:46 AM	6:40 PM
Friday	5:46 AM	6:40 PM
Saturday	5:46 AM	6:41 PM
Sunday	5:46 AM	6:41 PM
Monday	5:46 AM	6:41 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	4:39 AM	5:26 PM	-
Friday	5:17 AM	6:16 PM	-
Saturday	5:59 AM	7:08 PM	-
Sunday	6:45 AM	8:02 PM	-
Monday	7:35 AM	8:57 PM	-

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
12:39 AM	LOW TIDE	1.03
6:15 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.93
1:16 PM	LOW TIDE	0.23
7:55 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.84

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Friday, *Saipan Tribune* offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $180. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

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E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

GOVERNMENT RESOURCE LISTING PAGE 1 MAY 19, 2020, 9:30 AM

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
- ***Cashier & Customer Service***
  Monday - Friday (Closed on Holidays)
  7:30 AM - 3:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-4282
  Pay bills online at www.cucgov.org, via phone by calling toll free Tel: 1-(855)-729-2282, or at any Bank of Guam, Bank of Saipan, or Bank of Hawaii Branch

CNMI State Medicaid Agency
- ***Eligibility Office & Accounting / Claims***
  Monday - Friday
  7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-4880/4882
  Still accepting applications and supporting documents via drop-box at Medicaid Office. Medicaid application & renewal / redetermination forms must be original. Applications/forms available for pick up next to the drop-box or online at: www.medicaid.cnmi.mp

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
- Monday - Friday
  7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 322-6537/38
  Email: maryann@ovrgov.net
  Website: www.ovrgov.net

CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities
- Monday - Friday
  7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-7000 / 7003
  Email: cnmicouncilondd@gmail.com

CNMI Public Assistance Office
- ***Available via phone or email only:***
  Mondays - Fridays
  7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-2411
  Email: info@pa.gov.mp

Department of Public Works
- ***Administrative Services Division***
  Monday - Thursday
  8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 235-9570 / 5818
- ***Building Safety Code Division***
  Monday - Thursday
  8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 234-2726 / 2296
- ***Technical Services Division***
  Monday - Thursday
  8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 234-9828 / 9838
  - ***Highway Branch***
    Monday - Friday
    7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
- ***Energy Division***
  Monday - Friday
  7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-4480 / 4481
- ***Roads and Grounds Division***
  Monday - Friday
  7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 322-9498
- ***Solid Waste Management Division***
  - ***Lower Base Transfer Station & Marpi Landfill***
    Open all week except Wednesday & Sunday
    7:30 AM - 1:00 PM
    Tel: (670) 322-2745 (Lower Base)
    (670) 322-2761 (Marpi Landfill)

Department of Land and Natural Resources
- ***Division of Land Registration***
  Monday - Thursday
  8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 322-9987
- ***Division of Agriculture***
  Monday - Thursday
  8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 256-3320 / 3321
- ***Division of Fish & Wildlife***
  Monday - Thursday
  8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-6000

SOCIAL DISTANCING TO BE IMPLEMENTED AT ALL OFFICES

GOVERNOR'S COVID-19 TASK FORCE HOTLINE TEL: (670) 287-0046

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COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

GOVERNMENT RESOURCE LISTING PAGE 2 MAY 19, 2020, 9:30 AM

Department of Finance
- ***Division of Revenue & Taxation***
  Monday - Friday
  8:00 AM - 4:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-1000
- ***ALL OTHER DIVISIONS (Except Customs)***
  Monday - Thursday
  8:00 AM - 4:00 PM
- ***Division of Customs Services***
  - ***Airport:*** OPEN DAILY
    8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
  - ***Seaport:*** Monday - Friday
    8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
  - ***Chalan Kanoa Post Office:***
    Monday - Friday 7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
    Saturday 7:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Department of Public Lands
- ***Cashier accepting payments:***
  Monday - Friday, 8:30 AM - 3:30 PM
- ***Available via phone or email:***
  Monday - Friday, 7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 234-3751/52/53/54
  For appointments call (670) 234-3751 or email dpl@dpl.gov.mp

Saipan Zoning Office
- ***Available via phone ONLY:***
  Monday - Thursday
  7:30 AM - 11:30 AM
  Tel: (670) 234-9661/ 9662/ 9663
  Email: geri.delacruz@zoning.gov.mp

Office of the Attorney General
- ***Civil & Criminal Divisions***
  Monday - Friday
  8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 237-7500 / 7600

Office of the Public Defender
- Monday - Friday
  9:00 AM - 3:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 234-6503

Department of Public Safety
- ***Bureau of Motor Vehicle (BMV)***
  - ***Document Drop-Off For Vehicle / Watercraft Registration Renewal***
    Monday - Thursday
    8:00 AM - 11:00 AM
    Tel: (670) 664-9068
  - ***Walk-In For Drivers License***
    Monday - Thursday
    8:00 AM - 11:00 AM
    Tel: (670) 664-9066
- ***Firearms and Records***
  Monday - Thursday
  9:00 AM - 3:00 PM (For Walk-Ins)
  Tel: (670) 664-9072
- ***Highway Safety Office***
  Monday - Thursday (For Walk-Ins)
  9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-9121 / 9125 / 9131

Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services
- ***Fire Enforcement Office***
  Monday - Thursday
  7:30 AM - 4:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-9178

Commonwealth Bureau of Military Affairs
- Monday – Friday
  7:30 AM – 4:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 488-2200 / 0440 / 0550
  Email: glenna.reyes@gov.mp

Marianas Visitors Authority
- Monday – Friday
  8:00 AM – 12:00PM
  Tel: (670) 664-3200
  Website: mymarianas.com

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GOVERNOR'S COVID-19 TASK FORCE HOTLINE TEL: (670) 287-0046

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Business

Walmart becomes a pandemic lifeline, online sales surge 74%

NEW YORK (AP)—Walmart emerged as one of the few lifelines to millions of people as the coronavirus spread, leading to surging profit and sales for the world's largest retailer.

Online sales in the U.S. jumped 74% for its fiscal first quarter that ended April 30, which captured the brunt of the pandemic's outbreak. Same-store sales rose 10% at U.S. Walmart stores on strong sales of food, health and wellness goods.

At a time when a huge swath of stores that sell non-essential merchandise temporarily shut down, Walmart has the natural advantage of carrying the very items that consumers need during a pandemic.

But unlike its online rivals like Amazon, Walmart enjoys an extensive network of nearly 5,000 physical stores and a variety of delivery and pick-up options that it ramped up to meet crushing demand for essential items, from paper towels to canned food. Walmart's reputation for low prices also helped as the unemployment rate has spiraled to the high level since the Great Depression.

AP
In this March 31, 2020 file photo, a woman pulls groceries from a cart to her vehicle outside of a Walmart store in Pearl, Miss.

"Having a wide range of fulfillment options, including delivery to home, collection from store — and by using stores for fulfillment — allowed Walmart to ramp up capacity in a way that many other players struggled to do," said Neil Saunders, managing director at GlobalData Retail. "We also believe that by using stores effectively, Walmart mitigated some of the higher costs associated with the online channel."

Walmart shoppers did not limit their purchases to just essential items, using their federal stimulus checks to buy clothing, TVs and video games, which helped boost sales in April. Walmart also said it's seeing gains in new customers from across all income brackets.

At the same time, company, which is based in Bentonville, Arkansa, had trouble keeping its shelves stocked and its inventory fell 6.1%. Costs soared as well, to the tune of $900 million — all of it related to the pandemic.

Cash bonuses were issued to all hourly workers and Walmart upped pay by $2 per hour at its warehouses. It rolled out an emergency leave policy and spent money on shields at checkout lines. Still, it reported a higher operating profit.

Walmart pulled its guidance for the year, citing the chaos of the pandemic. It also pulled the plug on Jet.com, an online startup that it bought for more than $3 billion in 2016 as it sought to ramp up online operations to compete with Amazon.

Before the pandemic, there was already a broadening gap between big box stores and mall-based chains that had struggled to follow customers online. The crisis has accelerated that trend, pushing clothing chains further into peril.

J. Crew, J.C. Penney, Neiman Marcus and Stage Stores have all sought Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection this month. Pier 1 Imports, Inc., which filed for Chapter 11 in February, said Tuesday that it's winding down its business after stores are able to reopen and it can conduct liquidation sales.

The earnings picture is looking dismal for the fiscal first quarter.

Ken Perkins, president of research firm Retail Metrics, said he expects earnings will be down 36.6% for the 103 retailers he tracks compared to the year-ago period. Excluding Walmart, that figure would be down 45.5%. That would mark the worst earnings performance since at least 1998 when he started tracking the figures, and deeper that the 26.6% drop during the fourth quarter of 2008, the trough of the Great Recession.

IT&E to offer the new iPhone SE

IT&E will offer the powerful and affordable new iPhone SE on the widest most reliable 4G LTE network in Guam and the Marianas.

Featuring A13 Bionic, the fastest chip ever in a smartphone, iPhone SE offers unparalleled performance with great battery life, and the best single-camera system in an iPhone that unlocks the benefits of Portrait mode.

iPhone SE comes in three beautiful colors—black, white, and (PRODUCT) RED—with a popular design built to withstand the elements with dust and water resistance.

Customers can order the new iPhone SE Friday, May 22, 2020 at store.ite.net and in IT&E stores.

IT&E has been delivering connections that matter in Guam and the Marianas for more than 35 years. IT&E is the leading provider of mobile technology and world-class telecommunications services on the widest 4G LTE data network. ***(PR)***

AT&T quits Venezuela as US sanctions force it to defy Maduro

MIAMI (AP)—AT&T said Tuesday it will immediately ditch Venezuela's pay TV market as U.S. sanctions prohibit its DirecTV platform from broadcasting channels that it is required to carry by the socialist administration of Nicolás Maduro.

The Dallas-based company's closing of its Venezuela unit is effective immediately.

It follows a decision by the Trump administration not to renew a license it had granted AT&T to continue carrying Globovision, a private network, sanctioned by the U.S., owned by a businessman close to Maduro who is wanted on U.S. money laundering charges, three people familiar with the situation told the AP. They spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss U.S. government licensing activity.

AT&T joins a number of other U.S. companies—General Motors, Kellogg Co. and Kimberly-Clark—that have abandoned Venezuela due to shrinking sales, government threats and the risk of U.S. sanctions. Around 700 Venezuelans depended on the unit for employment.

"Because it is impossible for AT&T's DIRECTV unit to comply with the legal requirements of both countries, AT&T was forced to close its pay TV operations in Venezuela, a decision that was made by the company's U.S. leadership team without any involvement or prior knowledge of the DIRECTV Venezuela team," the company said in a statement.

At nighttime Tuesday, residents in Caracas started banging on pots and pans for nearly a half hour to spontaneously protest a decline in public services. Some yelled "I want my DirecTV" amid chants against Maduro.

AT&T has a 44% share of the pay TV market and its departure is likely to hit hard working-class barrios of larger cities and the interior that depend on DirecTV for access to information and entertainment.

An Associated Press investigation from January found that AT&T had been under increasing pressure from the Trump administration to stand up to Maduro's censors, who since 2017 have ordered the removal of some 10 channels, including CNN en Español, that had broadcast anti-government protests.

Local regulators accuse the channels of violating the Law on Social Responsibility on Radio and Television, which seeks to guarantee socially responsible programming but that press freedom groups consider it a tool to muzzle critical coverage due to its ambiguous language and heavy penalties. DirecTV is also a major platform for the broadcast of state-run TV outlets criticized by the opposition as propaganda.

A never-implemented plan promoted by the State Department would have forced AT&T to pull the plug on Globovision and the state-run channels while restoring some of the banned international news channels, according to five people familiar with the discussions cited in the earlier AP investigation.

J&J to stop selling talc-based baby powder in US, Canada

FAIRLESS HILLS, Pa. (AP)—Johnson & Johnson is ending sales of its iconic talc-based Johnson's Baby Powder in the U.S. and Canada, where demand has dwindled amid thousands of lawsuits claiming it has caused cancer.

The world's biggest maker of health care products said Tuesday the talc-based powder will still be sold outside the U.S. and Canada.

"Demand for talc-based Johnson's Baby Powder in North America has been declining due in large part to changes in consumer habits and fueled by misinformation around the safety of the product and a constant barrage of litigation advertising," the company said.

J&J faces about 19,400 cases alleging its talcum powder caused users to develop ovarian cancer, through use for feminine hygiene, or mesothelioma, a cancer that strikes the lungs and other organs.

Of the cases that have been tried, J&J has had 12 wins, 15 losses and seven mistrials. All of the losses have either been overturned on appeal or are still being appealed.

The company insists, and the overwhelming majority of medical research on talc indicates, that the talc baby powder is safe and doesn't cause cancer.

"Whether or not the powder actually causes cancer, people became hesitant to use the product," Erik Gordon, a professor at University of Michigan's business school, said in an email.

J&J spokeswoman Kimberly Montagnino said the company doesn't plan to settle any of the lawsuits and "will continue to vigorously defend" the product.

The New Brunswick, New Jersey, company said the baby powder decision came as it moves to discontinue about 100 consumer health products. It said its aim is to prioritize products in high demand during the coronavirus outbreak and allow for social distancing in its manufacturing and distribution facilities.

J&J will still sell its less-popular cornstarch-based baby powder in North America.

STOCK PORTFOLIO

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW	S&P	NASDAQ
24,206.86	2,922.94	9,185.10
−390.51	−30.97	−49.72
1.59%	1.05%	0.54%

EXCHANGE RATES

In U.S. dollar terms

Australian Dollar	1.5270	Hong Kong Dollar	7.7501	Russian Ruble	71.3371
British Pound	0.8151	Indian Rupee	75.1870	Singapore Dollar	1.4169
Canadian Dollar	1.3924	Japanese Yen	107.7830	South Korean Won	1203.32
Chinese Yuan	6.9937	Malaysian Ringgit	4.3069	Swiss Franc	0.9698
Euro	0.9138	New Zealand Dollar	1.6375	Taiwan Dollar	29.4357
		Philippine Peso	49.7422	Thailand Baht	31.8730

Nation

Trump allies lining up doctors to prescribe rapid reopening

WASHINGTON (AP)—Republican political operatives are recruiting "extremely pro-Trump" doctors to go on television to prescribe reviving the U.S. economy as quickly as possible, without waiting to meet safety benchmarks proposed by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to slow the spread of the new coronavirus.

The plan was discussed in a May 11 conference call with a senior staffer for the Trump reelection campaign organized by CNP Action, an affiliate of the GOP-aligned Council for National Policy. A leaked recording of the hourlong call was provided to The Associated Press by the Center for Media and Democracy, a progressive watchdog group.

CNP Action is part of the Save Our Country Coalition, an alliance of conservative think tanks and political committees formed in late April to end state lockdowns implemented in response to the pandemic. Other members of the coalition include the FreedomWorks Foundation, the American Legislative Exchange Council and Tea Party Patriots.

A resurgent economy is seen as critical to boosting President Donald Trump's reelection hopes and has become a growing focus of the White House coronavirus task force led by Vice President Mike Pence.

AP

In this Feb. 29, 2020, file photo, President Donald Trump is greeted by Matt Schlapp, Chairman of the American Conservative Union, as the president arrives to speak at the Conservative Political Action Conference, at National Harbor, in Oxon Hill, Md.

Tim Murtaugh, the Trump campaign communications director, confirmed to AP that an effort to recruit doctors to publicly support the president is underway, but declined to say when the initiative would be rolled out.

"Anybody who joins one of our coalitions is vetted," Murtaugh said Monday. "And so quite obviously, all of our coalitions espouse policies and say things that are, of course, exactly simpatico with what the president believes. ... The president has been outspoken about the fact that he wants to get the country back open as soon as possible."

During an emergency such as the current pandemic, it's important that the government provide consistent science-based information to the public, said Dr. Wafaa El-Sadr, an epidemiology professor at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health. Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation's top infectious disease expert and a member of the White House's coronavirus task force, has been among the most visible government experts warning that lifting lockdowns too quickly could lead to a spike in deaths.

El-Sadr said having doctors relay contradictory information on behalf of the president is "quite alarming."

"I find it totally irresponsible to have physicians who are touting some information that's not anchored in evidence and not anchored in science," El-Sadr said. "What often creates confusion is the many voices that are out there, and many of those voices do have a political interest, which is the hugely dangerous situation we are at now."

Murtaugh said the campaign is not concerned about contradicting government experts.

"Our job at the campaign is to reflect President Trump's point of view," Murtaugh said. "We are his campaign. There is no difference between us and him."

On the May 11 call, Nancy Schulze, a GOP activist who is married to former Rep. Dick Schulze, R-Pa., said she had given the campaign a list of 27 doctors prepared to defend Trump's reopening push.

"There is a coalition of doctors who are extremely pro-Trump that have been preparing and coming together for the war ahead in the campaign on health care," Schulze said on the call. "And we have doctors that are … in the trenches, that are saying 'It's time to reopen.'"

The idea quickly gained support from Mercedes Schlapp, a Trump campaign senior adviser who previously served two years as the president's director of strategic communications.

"Those are the types of guys that we should want to get out on TV and radio to help push out the message," Schlapp said on the call.

Mnuchin and Powell push differing priorities to aid economy

WASHINGTON (AP)—Facing the gravest U.S. economic crisis in decades, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell offered Congress contrasting views Tuesday of what the government's most urgent priority should be.

Striking a theme frequently pushed by President Donald Trump, Mnuchin warned that prolonged business shutdowns would pose long-term threats to the economy, from widespread bankruptcies for small businesses to long-term unemployment for millions of Americans.

"There is risk of permanent damage," Mnuchin said.

Powell, by contrast, stressed, as he has in recent weeks, that the nation is gripped by an economic shock "without modern precedent" and that Congress must consider providing further financial aid soon to support states, localities, businesses and individuals to prevent an even deeper recession.

"What Congress has done to date has been remarkably timely and forceful," Powell said. "But we need to step back and ask, 'Is it enough?"

Their points of emphasis reflect the contours of a debate occurring across the country, among individuals, business people and political leaders, about when and under what circumstances the economy should reopen and what further help the government can or should provide.

Mnuchin and Powell offered their views at an oversight hearing of the Senate Banking Committee at which members of both parties questioned them about when their agencies will distribute more of the emergency aid that Congress provided in late March to struggling small businesses and households.

Powell said that a highly anticipated lending program the Fed is creating for small businesses should be operating by the end of the month. And in a turnaround, Mnuchin said the Treasury is now prepared to absorb some losses in that program, which is funded by Treasury. Doing so could enable the Fed to take on further risk with the program and help more struggling companies.

During the hearing, Mnuchin clashed sharply with Democratic Sens. Sherrod Brown of Ohio and Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts over the administration's support for a phased reopening of the economy and over its reluctance to require that all companies that receive government aid keep their workers on the payroll.

Brown charged that the Trump administration was risking the lives of lower-income workers by supporting reopening efforts and was doing so simply to boost financial markets. He asserted that the administration hasn't done enough to protect front-line workers—by, for example, ramping up viral testing—even as most states start allowing restaurants, stores and gyms to reopen.

Boy Scout councils under pressure to share sex abuse costs

NEW YORK (AP)—Nine sex abuse lawsuits were filed Tuesday in New York against three Boy Scout local councils, signaling an escalation of efforts to pressure councils nationwide to pay a big share of an eventual settlement in the Scouts' bankruptcy proceedings.

The lawsuits were filed shortly after an easing of coronavirus lockdown rules enabled courts in some parts of New York to resume the handling of civil cases.

One of the lawyers coordinating the filing, Mike Pfau, said his Seattle-based firm expects to file scores more lawsuits in other parts of New York, as well as in New Jersey and California, after full reopening of courts there.

Two other firms, Oregon-based Crew Janci LLP and Chicago-based Hurley McKenna & Mertz, said they had similar plans, indicating there could be hundreds of such lawsuits altogether.

At least through June 8, an injunction issued by the bankruptcy judge, Laurie Selber Silverstein, blocks the lawyers from proceeding with lawsuits against the local councils. But several lawyers said they will press for the injunction to be lifted unless the councils' financial information is fully disclosed and they agree to contribute significantly to a proposed victim compensation fund.

"The local councils are required to make a substantial contribution," said Stephen Crew, of Crew Janci. "If they don't, the plan won't be approved."

The Boy Scouts of America filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in February in hopes of surviving a barrage of lawsuits, many of them made possible by recent changes in state laws to allow people to sue over long-ago sexual abuse.

Proceedings are underway at federal bankruptcy court in Delaware aimed at creating a compensation fund for thousands of men molested as youngsters decades ago by scoutmasters or other leaders.

In its bankruptcy filing, the BSA said the 261 local councils, which have extensive property holdings and other assets, are separate legal entities and should not be included as debtors in the case.

The councils are represented by an ad hoc committee in the proceedings, and negotiations are in progress over disclosure of their assets and records as a step toward determining their contributions to the compensation fund.

Pfau said he was skeptical the councils would agree to contributions large enough to forestall lawsuits against them.

The lawsuits filed Tuesday involve allegations of abuse from men who were Scouts decades ago in local councils in upstate New York that have subsequently merged into the Leatherstocking Council, the Baden-Powell Council and the Seneca Waterways Council.

Leaders of those three councils declined to comment on the new lawsuits. Two of them referred inquiries to BSA headquarters, which issued a statement reiterating its goal of fairly compensating abuse survivors while preserving the Boy Scouts' mission.

Asia

In this photo released by the Taiwan Presidential Office, Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen, center, walks ahead of Vice-President Lai Ching-te, left of her, as they attend an inauguration ceremony in Taipei, Taiwan, Wednesday, May 20, 2020. AP

Taiwan president calls for stability in China relations

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP)—Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen called for stability in relations with China in her inaugural address Wednesday but said she would not accept Beijing's political terms that would "downgrade Taiwan and undermine the cross-strait status quo."

Reelected by a landslide late last year, Tsai said relations with Beijing had reached a "historical turning point" and that "peace, parity, democracy, and dialogue" should form the basis for contacts between the sides as a means to prevent intensifying antagonisms and differences.

Tsai said Taiwan would also work to increase its participation in international society, even as Beijing seeks to shut it out and poach allies away from the self-governing island democracy it claims as its own territory.

"We will not accept the Beijing authorities' use of 'one country, two systems' to downgrade Taiwan and undermine the cross-strait status quo," Tsai told an audience at the baroque Taipei Guest House in the center of the capital. Those in attendance were separated according to social distancing guidelines and some wore masks to guard against the spread of the coronavirus.

Tsai represents the ruling Democratic Progressive Party which advocates Taiwan's formal independence, something Beijing says it will use force to prevent.

Her election to a second, four-year term came after the repression of pro-democracy protests in the nearby Chinese semi-autonomous region of Hong Kong solidified public opinion in Taiwan against moves toward accepting rule by Beijing.

The sides split amid civil war in 1949 and Beijing has cut off ties with Tsai's government over her refusal to accept its demand that she recognize the island as a part of China to be unified with eventually under the "one country, two systems" policy enacted in Hong Kong.

Beijing's diplomats have prevented Taiwan from joining international gatherings such as the World Health Organization and reduced its number of diplomatic allies to a handful, while its military has boosted patrols and exercises aimed at intimidating the island's population.

In her speech, Tsai emphasized the need to boost national security, including against non-traditional threats such as cyber and "cognitive" warfare, defined partly by the use of disinformation on social media.

Tsai, 63, is a former law professor and unique in being the only modern woman leader in Asia to rise to the top without being part of a political dynasty.

India and Bangladesh brace for powerful cyclone

NEW DELHI (AP)—A powerful cyclone was moving toward India and Bangladesh on Tuesday as authorities tried to evacuate millions of people while maintaining social distancing.

Cyclone Amphan is expected to make landfall on Wednesday afternoon, and forecasters warned of extensive damage from high winds, heavy rainfall, tidal waves and some flooding in crowded cities like Kolkata.

The cyclone had winds of 220-230 kilometers per hour (136-142 miles per hour) and is forecast to weaken before it makes landfall around India's West Bengal state and Bangladesh.

It is the second super cyclone on record that has formed over the Bay of Bengal, said Mrutyunjay Mohapatra, India's meteorological chief. The first was a devastating 1999 cyclone in Odisha state that left nearly 10,000 people dead.

"This type of cyclone can be disastrous," Mohapatra said.

Videos and photos from India and Bangladesh showed families near the coast or in other flood-prone areas being evacuated to cyclone shelters. Some carried bags with their belongings, and all had their faces covered to protect against the virus. Officials went from village to village with loudspeakers warning people of the storm.

"Evacuations are necessary," warned Mohapatra, pointing out that tidal waves could move 25 kilometers (15 miles) inland along the many rivers that crisscross the Bengal delta.

Authorities in Bangladesh warned that the cyclone could flood vast swaths of southwestern and southern areas. Junior Minister for Disaster Management and Relief Enamur Rahman said more than 50,000 people had already been evacuated in Satkhira district, which was devastated by a 2009 cyclone.

World

ON COVID-19 FIGHT

US and China standoff ensnares WHO meeting

GENEVA (AP)—Facing the most disruptive pandemic in generations, the technocratic halls of the World Health Organization are now the scene of pitched battles in an increasingly bitter proxy war between the China and the United States.

At the U.N. health agency's annual assembly this week, Chinese President Xi Jinping joined by video conference to offer more money and support. Meanwhile, U.S. President Donald Trump railed against the WHO in a letter accusing it of covering up the coronavirus outbreak with China—and threatening to permanently halt U.S. funding that has been its main financial lifeblood for years.

It marked the latest showdown between the world's last superpower and the rising Asian giant vying to supplant it on the global stage—this time against the backdrop of a disease that has killed over 300,000 people, left hundreds of millions jobless and ground the world economy to a halt.

For America's allies in the West and beyond — who have counted on the postwar stability and prosperity that the United States has fostered—the standoff was another gut-check moment about the "America First" leader, now heading into a tough reelection contest.

Lawrence Gostin, director of the WHO Collaborating Center on Health and Human Rights at Georgetown University, said the withdrawal of the U.S. from the global health world would mark a seismic political shift.

"What the U.S. is doing is acting like a bully, making an existential threat to the WHO, and my worry is if the U.S. ever made good on that pledge, the world would splinter," he said. "This is giving an enormous political prize to China because China has long been looking for a chance to shine on the global stage."

A U.S. exit would likely weaken the global health agency and leave the U.S. and China to each fund their own projects, Gostin said.

At the assembly that ended Tuesday, European Union leaders tried to strike a middle ground between the two rivals, and the agency's director-general simply tried to keep the focus on fighting the disease—not each other.

The assembly's opening day Monday was book-ended by two very different messages. On one side, Xi, serene beside the Chinese flag and a landscape mural, called in to say that China would offer $2 billion over two years to help with the COVID-19 response and economic fallout. He vowed that any vaccine against the disease developed in his country would be made a "global public good."

On the other, Trump threatened to cut U.S. funding to the WHO for good unless the agency commits to "substantive improvements" in the next 30 days, in a letter to agency Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. It's not clear what those improvements are.

"I cannot allow American taxpayer dollars to continue to finance an organization that, in its present state, is so clearly not serving America's interests," Trump wrote.

The U.S. is the biggest WHO donor, providing about $450 million a year.

Europeans looked on aghast.

"Watching the World Health Assembly today was observing the post-American world," tweeted former Swedish Prime Minister Carl Bildt, co-chair of the European Council on Foreign Relations. "A confident and assertive China with clear strategic approach. A EU trying to rescue what's left of global cooperation. And a disruptive U.S. more keen on fighting China than fighting COVID19."

Trump's threat followed an intense internal debate within the administration between aides intent on eliminating all funding for the WHO and those favoring a more measured response, such as pegging U.S. funding temporarily to the level provided by China, according to three U.S. officials familiar with the matter. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the issue publicly.

Document details Canada mass shooter's paranoia, weapons

HALIFAX, Nova Scotia (AP)—A document released Tuesday in a Canadian court details warning signs of paranoid behavior and the stockpiling of guns and gasoline by the man who went on a rampage that killed 22 people in Nova Scotia last month.

In the document made public following an application by media organizations, seven witnesses who had encountered Gabriel Wortman told of his personality issues or recounted seeing some of his weapons at his clinic in Dartmouth and a property in Portapique that he dubbed "the warehouse."

One witness described the now dead gunman as an abusive "sociopath" who kept a rifle by the fireplace that was described as "like a machine gun."

A former colleague told officers that Wortman was "paranoid" about the COVID-19 pandemic and added that he had experienced "a mental breakdown" while discussing a deed for a property in Portapique. That witness was among those who said the killer talked about various types of guns, assault rifles and handguns.

The 40 pages offer glimpses of Wortman's rural property where the 51-year-old denturist entertained friends and kept a well-stocked bar and a collection of motorcycles. An acquaintance who visited told police that Wortman showed guests his guns and some decommissioned police cars he had bought.

Police have said that beginning on the night of April 18, Wortman used accelerants to light fires in five Nova Scotia communities and shot people with four semi-automatic weapons that he wasn't licensed to own as he drove about in a replica police car. Thirteen of the victims were killed by gunfire and nine died in fires, police have said.

Wortman, who was killed by police before noon April 19, owned four used police cars obtained at auction and collected police uniforms. He wore the uniforms during his rampage.

In the document, some witnesses estimated that Wortman had bought $800 worth of gasoline before the killings.

Emails from the killer written four days before the mass shooting provided no hint of what was to come.

"I am currently residing at my cottage in Portapique. I am enjoying this prelude to retirement, unfortunately not able to get to...," says one message, the last word removed by prosecutors before releasing the document. "I am around in the a.m.'s 9-12 studying the news on U-tube. Stay safe, Gabe."

Environment

(MARCUSYAM/LOSANGELES TIMES/TNS)
In this file photo, firefighters monitor a controlled burn as they work to contain the spread of the Maria fire in Santa Paula, CA, on Nov. 1, 2019. Fire authorities are growing increasingly concerned over their ability to muster a large, healthy force of firefighters in the face of COVID-19.

Coronavirus crisis raises worries over California wildfire season: 'This is a game changer'

By JOSEPH SERNA
LOS ANGELES TIMES

LOS ANGELES—As forecasters predict higher-than-normal chances of large fires in Northern California this year—as well as the usual risk of "large significant" burning in Southern California—fire authorities are growing increasingly concerned over their ability to muster a large, healthy force of firefighters in the face of COVID-19.

Realizing that wildfire smoke will steadily impair a firefighter's immune system, and that traditional base camps can magnify the risk of infection, federal, state and county officials are urging a blitzkrieg approach to wildfires that will rely heavily on the use of aircraft.

With the coronavirus still circulating, they say they cannot allow even the smallest secluded fire to smolder for the sake of forest ecology. All fires, they say, must be extinguished as quickly as possible.

"Unfortunately, this is not a year in which we can afford to assign firefighters to monitor and manage such wildland fires," Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, wrote to the departments of Interior and Agriculture recently as she urged aggressive firefighting in Northern California and other parts of the West. "Given the unprecedented conditions in this fire season, it is essential to utilize federal resources for immediate wildfire suppression to the greatest extent practicable."

The call for highly aggressive firefighting marks a return to an older ethos, particularly on federal lands, where most California forests are.

For most of the last century, the federal government's policy was to knock down every fire wherever it sprang up. In recent decades however, a different approach has evolved: Fires that don't pose a threat to the public are allowed to expand naturally, and burn away overgrowth. That is unlikely to be the case this fire season however, as protections against the spread of the coronavirus place new strains on fire agencies and their crews.

In many ways, the coronavirus is sending wildland firefighters back to the old school this fire season.

"Aggressive initial attack is the single most important method to ensure the safety of firefighters and the public; it also limits suppression costs," said Jessica Gardetto, a spokesperson for the Bureau of Land Management at the National Interagency Fire Center.

Even with the increased use of aircraft however, fire authorities still face a hard reality. Planes and helicopters are effective in slowing most fires, and allow crews on the ground to get on the scene and contain it, but history shows they do little to halt the wind-driven monsters that cause the most death and destruction.

The continued spread of the coronavirus, as well as the economic paralysis that has accompanied health restrictions, has impacted every aspect of wildland firefighting, including mutual aid arrangements and the widespread use of inmate firefighters.

"Speaking across the board, this is a game changer with COVID-19," said Mike Mohler, spokesman for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. "It's going to have to be an 'everybody's hands on deck' approach to this."

Mohler said his biggest concern is firefighters contracting COVID-19 and silently spreading it among fellow firefighters and knocking them out of service, or even spreading it among the public.

Already, the coronavirus has reduced the number of overall firefighters available in California.

When coronavirus infections spiked in state prisons, authorities granted early release to thousands of minimum-security inmates in an effort to reduce crowding and slow the spread of disease. Of those releases, 242 were inmate firefighters, according to the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. Inmate firefighters make up 43% of the state firefighting force.

In Los Angeles County, where voters recently rejected a measure to hire more firefighters and paramedics, Fire Chief Daryl Osby said potential staffing shortages and increased brush growth due to late-spring rains are cause for worry.

Aiming to take a more aggressive posture toward wildfires, crews are preparing five of the county's water-dropping helicopters to deploy during the day and night throughout the summer. The county is also planning to contract with two air tankers from Canada in August—a month earlier than usual, Osby said.

And, later this month, crews will begin inspecting wildfire-vulnerable homes to ensure that they have fire defensible space.

"It's going to be really important for our citizens to do the proper brush clearance," Osby said, "because when we get toward the fall months and start having our wind-driven incidents, we cannot guarantee to place an engine at every home."

Traditionally, California has been able to rely on its mutual-aid system for backup. The system, which sends local fire departments to battle wildfires in other jurisdictions, is experiencing heavy strain that could intensify as COVID-19-related budget shortfalls hit municipalities hard.

Among them is the Seaside Fire Department in Monterey County, where the firefighters' union recently agreed to a 10% pay cut amid a citywide hiring freeze. Layoffs and early retirements that were being considered have been avoided for now, said Jason Black, the president of the firefighters union.

But for how long is unclear.

"I don't have a crystal ball," Black said, "it's like everybody else, it depends on the rebound of the economy as the shelter in place gets lifted."

In an effort to limit the transmission of illness among wildland firefighters, officials are adjusting the layout at fire base camps, where fire crews traditionally eat, sleep and bathe in close quarters, along with many caterers and contractors. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, outbreaks of "camp crud" were notorious in such environments, and a union representative for the U.S. Forest Service has likened them to "cruise ships on land."

Cal Fire said its camps may end up taking up a larger footprint, such as two fairgrounds instead of one, or a large parking lot, to provide adequate spacing among crews.

Either way, firefighters battling flames on the front lines and communities downwind will be more vulnerable to infection because of their smoke exposure, said Dr. John Balmes, a volunteer physician with the American Lung Association and a member of the California Air Resources Board.

"Wildfire smoke is kind of like cigarette smoke—a mixture of carbon-based particles and irritant gases," Balmes said. With the body's immune system preoccupied battling these foreign invaders in the lungs, that gives it less ammunition to fight the coronavirus, Balmes explained.

In California, a soggy spring has so far kept the 2020 fire season at bay. In states where fires have already begun however, fire crews are learning that protections against the coronavirus—cleaning, distancing and wearing masks—can become burdens when trying to respond to wildfires.

Shawn Faiella, superintendent of the Lolo National Forest's interagency hotshot crew in Montana, summed it up this way in a report to the federally funded Wildland Fire Lessons Learned Center: "It is damn tough to take these practices to the fireline."

On the long drive to an incident, firefighters avoided drinking water, out of concern about touching their face masks, and increased their risk of dehydration. They also traveled in more vehicles than usual, to ensure proper distancing, and thereby increased their chances of a crash—one of the leading causes of death for firefighters.

"If this had been an emerging incident with evacuations, tight road parking, smoke, and significant fire growth, not only would this be an impossible feat to park all the vehicles—we would be putting my crew in significant danger. And we just arrived on incident," Faiella wrote.

Finding places to eat in states with shelter-at-home orders proved difficult as well, as did maintaining social distance with colleagues on the fire line and the public who approached with questions. Routine things to speed up a firefight like sharing equipment between agencies now violate COVID-19 guidelines.

"If the intent is to fight fire, there needs to be an understanding that COVID-19 social distancing recommendations cannot be fully adhered to when engaged in firefighting," read a report from the April 17 Verde fire in Colorado. "The question needs to be answered: does a lack of completely adhering to COVID measures mean less engagement or not?"

Life & Style

A book on culture, tradition and over 100 Chamoru recipes

By BEA CABRERA
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Correspondent

Gerard and his wife, Mary Aflague, were born and raised in Guam and have family ties that run deep in the CNMI.

Partner that with the passion and desire to preserve the legacy of the Chamoru culture by highlighting the culinary traditions of the people in the Marianas and you have the book, *Chamoru Cuisine: A Marianas Cultural Legacy*.

Now based in Colorado, Gerard said that they wanted to write a book that he could share with family, friends, and the world about food and dishes in the Marianas. Rather than compartmentalizing Guam versus the Northern Marianas Islands, he wanted to bring all the islands together in one book.

"Mary and I have collaborated in many children-themed books. However, this is the first time that we've published a comprehensive book of this size. …I realized there was an opportunity to create a book of culture and cuisine and make it a 'One Marianas' concept. … My grandmother, Anna Calvo, was born on Rota. I have relatives married to people from the CNMI and these make for a love that we have for all the islands and what they are able to offer. …We knew that we could be a force for bringing our people together to show a sense of solidarity," he said.

"…We think that our first edition of *Chamoru Cuisine* shouts of a 'One Marianas' concept. …We are one people as a Marianas group and we need to think more along those lines. I know there are many people from Guam that also have connections like us to the Northern Marianas," he said.

Chamoru Cuisine: A Marianas Cultural Legacy is not just a book about cooking. Packed with cultural wisdom and knowledge, it is also about a Chamoru family's legacy, framing aspects of Chamoru culture and sharing an abundance of culinary insights and the tasty cuisine of Guam, Rota, Tinian, and Saipan. It aims to be both inspirational and educational.

"Our book offers short cultural narratives, history of Chamoru cuisine, island images and over 100 recipes that the we share, among other things. Think of our book as a Marianas recipe book that also offers imagery and narratives to offer context about the Chamoru people, language, and culture," Gerard said.

"…It is a Chamoru recipe book that aims to integrate all four Mariana islands to frame a sense of solidarity among us as a people with a common language, culture, and cuisine. … People can expect a legacy book that would be a valuable reference for families, communities and the rest of the world. …It offers an opportunity to learn about an ancient culture and a little-known but tasty Chamoru cuisine to discover and try for themselves," Gerard added.

The motivation and inspiration to write this book came from personal experiences. "… The moments took place in 2017 when our family returned home to assist my siblings with caring for our elderly parents who fell ill. While we took turns to take care of them at the hospital and at home, we witnessed the reciprocity of the islanders' acts of kindness coming to life. We observed many people showing their compassion—offering to visit and share their time, help care, pray, sing with them and bring home-cooked Chamoru dishes," Gerard said.

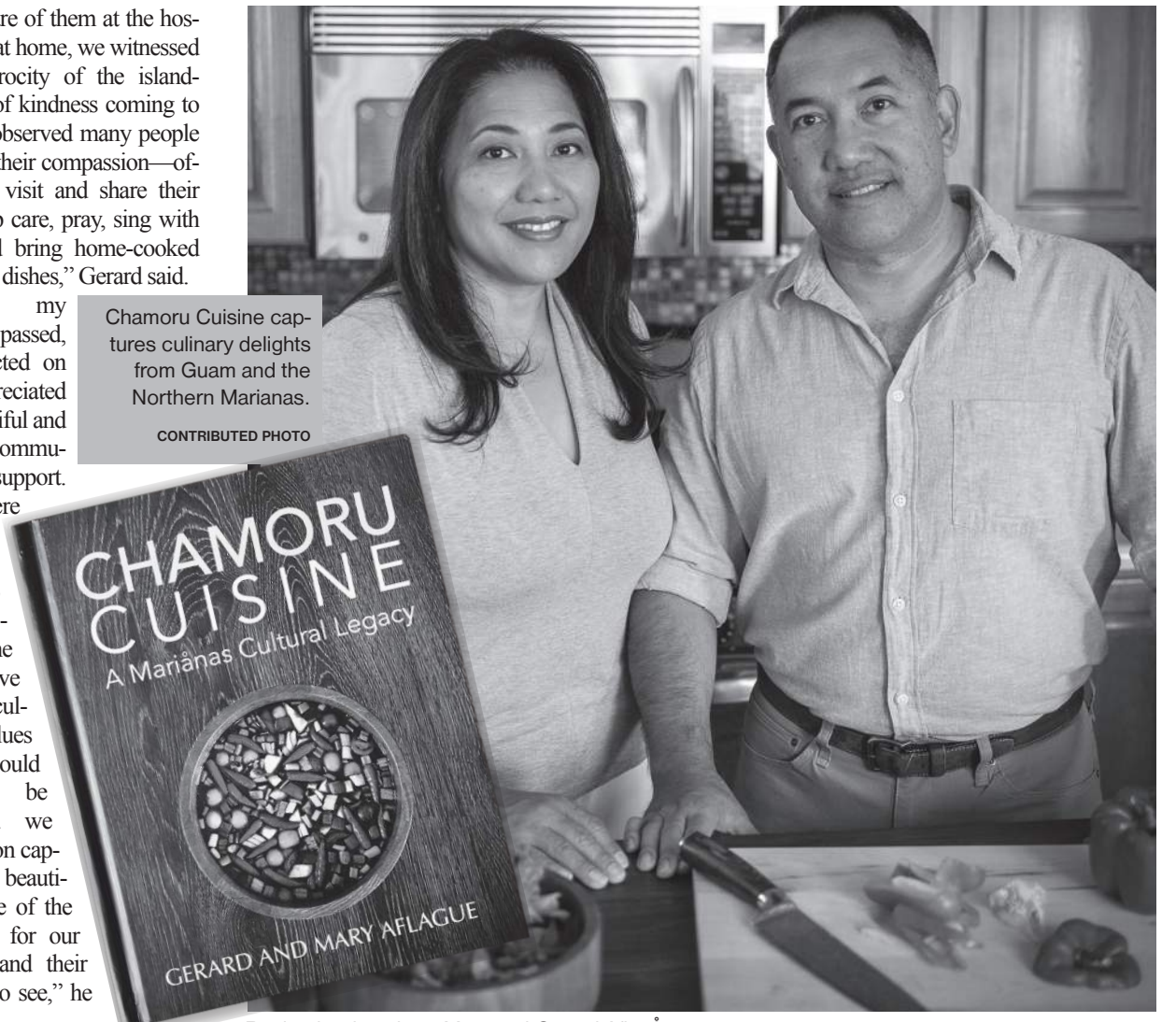
"After my mother passed, we reflected on and appreciated this beautiful and genuine community of support. We were determined to return to our Colorado home to preserve these cultural values that could otherwise be lost…and we were set on capturing the beautiful people of the Marianas for our children and their children to see," he added.

With over 400 pages, it took an incredible amount of time to research topics and prepare the dishes featured in the book. "…This book was truly a family affair. …We even spent countless hours shopping, cooking, tasting and judging whether it was worthy of adding to our book. We got our children involved in a variety of ways. …We feel confident that our decisions helped us craft a great first edition and the book represent our people well," he said.

In selecting what dishes to feature, Gerard said they started with family favorites, recipes that were passed down from their parents and grandparents. "These timeless, tried-and-true dishes were an essential part of our gatherings. …We also selected many homestyle recipes our parents cooked for many years. We were also receptive to recipes that we have always wanted to create or recreate, some of which we have described as being island-style. In many of our select recipes, we try to use wholesome ingredients available to people," he added.

Gerard hopes that people in the Marianas will continue to perpetuate and preserve this beautiful Chamoru legacy. "We feel that we have a responsibility to do just that and that is how *Chamoru Cuisine* came to life. Continue to enjoy food around the table, have meaningful discussions with your children and share with them the importance of food in our culture," he added.

Chamoru Cuisine: A Marianas Cultural Legacy is only $ 44.95. Order a personalized autographed copy on ChamoruCuisine.com by emailing sales@gerardaflaguecollection.com or send a message on WhatsApp at 703-508-9989.rard Aflague, Food, Lifestyle, Local



Chamoru Cuisine captures culinary delights from Guam and the Northern Marianas.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Recipe book authors Mary and Gerard AflagÅe.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Security camera captures angry man's hourlong rant

DEAR ABBY: A few weeks ago, my husband and I had what I thought was a minor conflict, from which I walked away to avoid escalation. I could hear him continuing to rant, so I pulled up the security camera on my phone and watched and listened as he continued to say horrible things for an hour or more. He called me a disgusting blob, said there is nothing appealing about me, and I should go out in the yard and kill myself just like my father did.

The words were so painful that I began to sob uncontrollably and screamed in anguish. He never came to console me. In fact, he told me to "shut up." I'm not a crier, typically, so his blatant disregard for the effect his words had on me raises another level of concern.

We have since discussed the event, and his first defense was to say he didn't know I could hear him. Meanwhile, I have to live with the fact that I'm married to a man who has such a low opinion of me that he thinks I should kill myself.

I have no family, and I'm hesitant to upend a life that is finally stable after a chaotic childhood and early adulthood. My husband isn't typically abusive, but this incident has me questioning everything. We have been together for 22 years and married for nearly 16 with no children. What are your thoughts?

— THROWN INTO TURMOIL

DEAR THROWN: My first thought is that you and your husband need to find a healthier way to deal with your "conflicts" than your walking out on him, and him saying nasty things into a camera knowing full well he might be heard. If your definition of stability is tolerating further verbal abuse, then you are -- and will be -- paying a high price for it.

I sincerely hope the two of you will try to iron out your differences with the help of a licensed marriage and family therapist. After all the years you have invested in each other, it's worth a shot.

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I married 20 years ago. He never proposed; he just came home one day from boot camp and said, "We need to get married tomorrow so that I can get paid more," and we did. I regret that day. It wasn't what I wanted, and it meant nothing to me.

Since then, so much has happened. He cheated on me while he was in the service, and had PTSD to the point where he tried to kill himself, among other things.

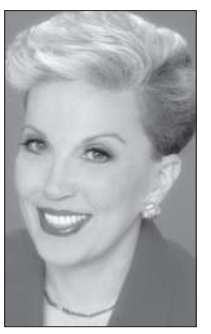
We are now in a happy place and have two awesome kids. I would like to redo our wedding day and for him to propose to me. The problem is, he isn't ready. He said he hasn't done it because we have had more lows than highs. He said he will eventually, when he feels the time is right.

My feelings are hurt, and now I'm questioning why I am still here. I have stuck by his side for 20 years, through thick and thin. I deserve that and much more. I'm not asking for anything over the top. Do you think I'm overreacting, or should I finally move on?

— TIRED OF WAITING IN TEXAS

DEAR ABBY

By Abigail Van Buren
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

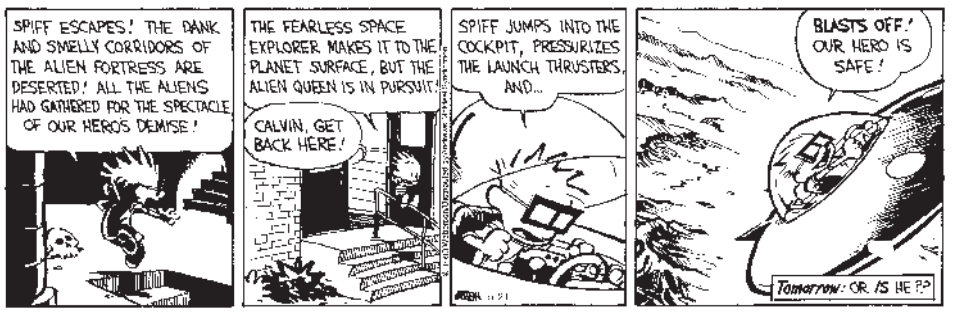
DEAR TIRED: I don't think you are overreacting; I think you are over-orchestrating. You say you and your husband are in a happy place now after years of struggle, plus you have two awesome kids. Now is not the time to upset the apple cart. More important than redoing his proposal and your wedding day is devoting some time to working on communicating more effectively with each other.

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


SPIFF ESCAPES! THE DANK AND SMELLY CORRIDORS OF THE ALIEN FORTRESS ARE DESERTED! ALL THE ALIENS HAD GATHERED FOR THE SPECTACLE OF OUR HERO'S DEMISE!
THE FEARLESS SPACE EXPLORER MAKES IT TO THE PLANET SURFACE, BUT THE ALIEN QUEEN IS IN PURSUIT!
CALVIN, GET BACK HERE!
SPIFF JUMPS INTO THE COCKPIT, PRESSURIZES THE LAUNCH THRUSTERS, AND...
BLASTS OFF! OUR HERO IS SAFE!
Tomorrow: OR IS HE?

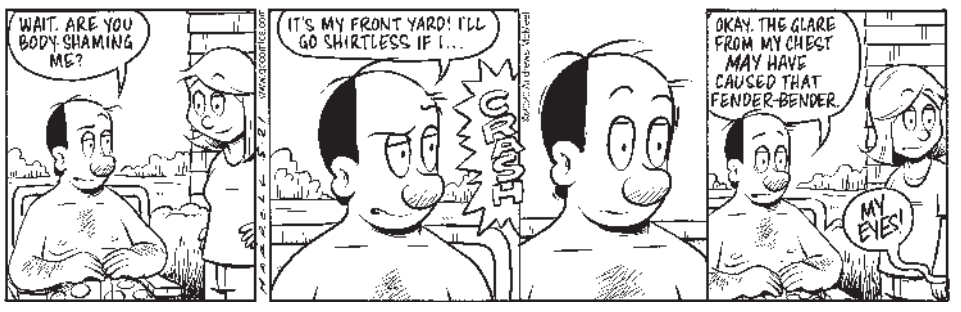
Garfield®

By Jim Davis

DON'T MESS WITH ME, PUNK!
OR YOU'LL BE SORRY! YOU GOT THAT?
YEAH, I'M A TOUGH GUY
YEAH, YOU TOLD THAT MIRROR A THING OR TWO
JIM DAVIS 5-21

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


WAIT. ARE YOU BODY SHAMING ME?
IT'S MY FRONT YARD! I'LL GO SHIRTLESS IF I...
CRUSH
OKAY. THE GLARE FROM MY CHEST MAY HAVE CAUSED THAT FENDER-BENDER.
MY EYES!

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

YOU KNOW WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE 6 FEET APART FOR SAFE SOCIAL DISTANCING.
WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO? IT'S ONLY A 4-FOOT COUCH!
CAN'T YOU HAVE IT LENGTHENED?
YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS!
I THINK IT'S TIME I START SEEING GUYS WITH LARGER LIVING ROOM FURNITURE.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

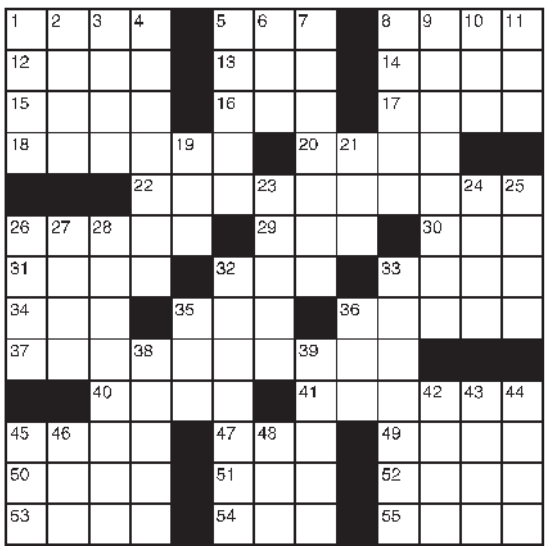
1 Avocado dip, for short
5 NYPD alert
8 Overconfident
12 Author Ferber
13 Trio after R
14 Luau entertainment
15 Katy Perry hit song
16 La —, Bolivia
17 Doctrines
18 Hire
20 Galvanizing metal
22 Dated
26 World record?
29 Squealer
30 Golf prop
31 Curds' partner
32 Morning moisture
33 Hammer part
34 Ad —
35 Museum-funding org.
36 Movies
37 Dated
40 Hybrid fruit
41 Italy's continent
45 Hoopster Malone
47 "Today" rival, briefly
49 Study all night
50 Paris notion
51 Refusals
52 Off-white
53 Pitch
54 Drunkard
55 June honorees

DOWN

1 "Arbitrage" star Richard
2 Japanese noodle
3 Scrambled wd.
4 Rye bread seed
5 Colorado ski resort
6 School org.
7 Noisy wood cutter
8 Glisten
9 Sweet variety of wine
10 Einstein's birthplace
11 Petrol
19 Some fridges
21 Hairy Addams cousin
23 Pick up the tab
24 Consider
25 Hankerings
26 "Horton Hears —!"
27 Grand
28 Educational talks
32 Blueprints
33 Like some earlobes
35 Super Bowl org.
36 Winter ailment
38 Leers at
39 You'll get a rise out of it
42 Sea predator
43 Crony, out West
44 Flightless birds
45 Tool set
46 Hubbub
48 Cattle call

Solution time: 24 mins.

Yesterday's answer 5-21



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Fairuza Balk, 46; Lisa Edelstein, 54; Nick Cassavetes, 61; Judge Reinhold, 63.

Happy Birthday: Spice things up, and do things differently. Take time to explore something unfamiliar. Learn all you can, and reach out to those who have something unique to offer. Consider what you can do to make your life better, relationships stable and future bright. Discipline and hard work will result in enjoying the well-deserved benefits you receive. Your numbers are 9, 12, 21, 28, 32, 36, 40.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Charm, persistence and knowledge will make it difficult for others to deny you what you want. Don't exaggerate or oversell what you have to offer; it won't be necessary, and it can lead to a reversal of fortune. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Channel your emotional energy into something constructive. Consider what you want to accomplish, and don't stop until you reach your destination. Establish a routine that allows you to be more productive. Be aware of what others expect, like and appreciate. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Dealing with others will not be easy. Listen, question motives and consider what's fair before you agree to something that may jeopardize your future. Know your rights, and voice your opinion. Verify facts, and proceed with caution. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Forward motion will be better for you than living in the past. Don't fear the unknown. An open mind, innovative spirit and the will to bring about positive change will make your life better. Focus on what's possible, and don't look back. ✪✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* You can improve your financial situation if you are disciplined and choose to follow your path. Getting involved in someone's plan will diminish your chance to explore what you want and do best. Live your dream. ✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Set goals as well as boundaries. If you spread yourself too thin, you will miss your mark. Pick up information, skills and insight into what's possible, and set your plans in motion. Decline a joint venture, and do your own thing. ✪✪✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Explore your options, gather information or take a correspondence course. Do whatever it takes to prepare for your next venture. Refuse to let someone interfere with your plans. Instead of being controlled, take the reins. Personal improvement should be a priority. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* It's up to you to make changes. Consider what it is you want, and work diligently to put everything in place to ensure your success. Altering your lifestyle should bring you peace of mind and a more significant opportunity to fulfill your dreams. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Move things around at home to suit your changing lifestyle. Distance yourself from individuals who are indulgent or untrustworthy. Nurture meaningful relationships that bring out the best in you and encourage and support your efforts. Get back to basics. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* When uncertain, sit tight. Spend more time making positive changes at home that will bring you comfort and ease your stress. Set high standards when it comes to relationships, health and lifestyle. Take fewer risks, and aim for stability and security. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Consider your options, and you'll figure out the best way to proceed. Refuse to let opposition and meddlers stand between you and what you want. Follow the path that suits you, not what someone chooses for you. ✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* A change to the way you live, your financial situation or your relationship with someone you've known for a long time will leave you questioning the decisions you've made in the past. Learn from experience, but don't lose sight of the future. ✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are intense, passionate and appreciative. You are motivated and intelligent.

Visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

1			5		8	7		3
		6					8	
							2	
4			2					
	6	2				4	1	
					3			5
	7							
	5					6		
9		4	7		5			1

Difficulty Level ★★★ 5/21

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

9	4	5	8	2	7	6	3	1
3	2	8	1	6	5	9	7	4
7	6	1	4	9	3	8	5	2
6	9	7	2	5	8	4	1	3
1	8	2	6	3	4	7	9	5
5	3	4	9	7	1	2	8	6
8	1	9	3	4	2	5	6	7
4	5	6	7	1	9	3	2	8
2	7	3	5	8	6	1	4	9

Difficulty Level ★★★

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

EATING IN SRI LANKA — Solution: 9 letters

N	P	E	K	A	C	N	A	P	A	R	I	P	P	U
O	O	L	O	O	K	I	A	S	O	H	T	O	M	S
T	I	I	I	H	T	A	B	A	B	N	R	A	I	A
T	M	N	N	E	S	R	R	E	T	R	W	A	R	S
U	A	P	A	O	E	F	E	O	I	U	G	P	H	O
M	E	S	L	H	V	R	G	D	L	R	N	Y	S	M
U	T	T	O	K	I	I	G	A	A	L	R	A	A	A
S	S	U	Y	I	D	E	S	V	B	R	S	D	E	S
T	N	N	H	R	L	D	Y	I	U	O	E	T	R	P
A	E	H	T	I	A	Y	E	C	A	M	I	E	L	L
R	K	S	L	B	M	R	O	T	I	R	P	L	O	I
D	C	I	A	A	C	H	I	L	I	P	P	E	B	T
E	I	F	E	T	U	N	O	C	O	C	S	M	M	N
E	H	R	H	H	E	W	E	H	S	A	C	O	A	E
S	C	R	A	B	U	T	T	I	P	O	L	O	S	L

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Aluwa, Babath, Boil, Cashew, Chicken, Chili, Coconut, Crab, Creamy, Curry, Egg, Fish, Fried, Gravy, Healthy, Herbs, Hoppers, Kiribath, Kool, Kottu, Lamprais, Lentil, Lime, Made, Maldives, Manioc, Mustard, Mutton, Nuts, Omelet, Onion, Pancake, Parippu, Peanut, Pittu, Polos, Porridge, Rolls, Roti, Sambol, Samosas, Sate, Seed, Shrimp, Spicy, Steam, Teas, Thosai

Yesterday's Answer: Sundra Islands

The NEW **Treasury 39** can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

Grant, Bulls teammates fire back at Jordan

CHICAGO—A fascinating byproduct of ESPN's The Last Dance is the relitigation of events that occurred over two decades ago.

Old wounds have reopened. Old jealousies have resurfaced.

Dynasties don't just feature winning. They feature strong personalities and plenty of testosterone.

So it shouldn't really surprise that teammates are starting to clap back at some of Michael Jordan's claims from throughout the 10-hour documentary.

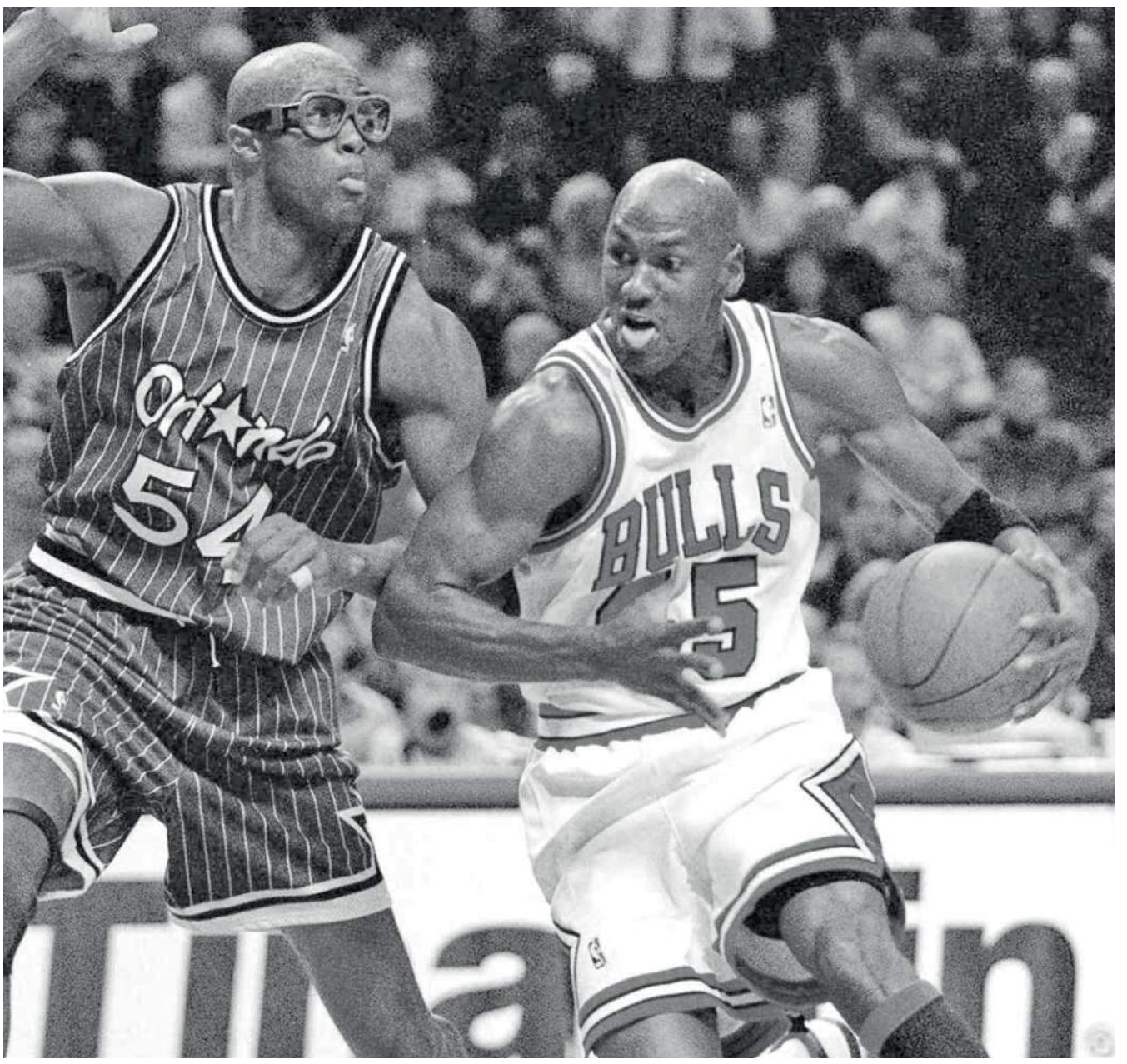
Speaking Tuesday morning on ESPN-AM 1000's "Kap and Co.," Horace Grant in particular took offense to Jordan's claim that he was the primary source for journalist Sam Smith's seminal book "The Jordan Rules."

"As I stated to everybody, that is a downright, outright, complete lie. Lie, lie, lie. And as I stated, if MJ has a grudge with me, let's talk about it or we can settle it another way. But yet still, he goes out and puts this lie out that I was the source," Grant told Kaplan, who also works for NBC Sports Chicago. "Sam and I have always been great friends. We still are great friends. But the sanctity of that locker room, I would never put anything personal out there. The mere fact that Sam Smith was an investigative reporter, that he had to have two sources to write a book, why would MJ just point me out, Ok? It's only a grudge man, I'm telling you."

"During this so-called documentary, if you say something about him, he's gonna cut you off. He's gonna try to destroy your character. I mean, Charles Barkley, they've been friends for over 20, 30 years and he said something about Michael's management with the Charlotte Hornets and then they haven't spoken since then. My point is that he said I was the snitch but yet still after 30, 35 years, he brings up his rookie year going into one of his teammate's rooms and seeing coke and weed and women. Why the hell did he want to bring that up? What's that got to do with anything? I mean, if you want to call somebody a snitch, that's a damn snitch right there," he added.

Grant also fired back at a story told by Smith during a radio appearance that Jordan told flight attendants aboard the team's charter plane to keep the power forward from eating when he didn't play well.

"Anybody who knows me as a rookie knows that if anybody comes up and tries to snatch my food away, I'm gonna do my best to beat their ass. And believe me, back then I could've took MJ in a heartbeat," Grant told Kaplan. "Yes, it's true that he told the flight attendant, 'Well, don't give him anything cause he played like crap.' And I went right back at him. I said some choice words that I won't repeat on here. But I had some choice words and stood up. If you want it, you come and get it. And of course, he didn't move. He was just barking. But that was the story. Anybody that knows me, where I come from or what I stand for, come on man, there's nobody on this earth that would ever come and try to take food off my plate and not get their rear end beaten."



AP
In this March 24, 1995 file photo, Chicago Bulls' Michael Jordan (45) drives against Orlando's Horace Grant (54) during the second quarter of an NBA game in Chicago.

In a roundtable presented by BetOnline.ag called The Final Dance, Grant went a step further.

"Let me clear something up about this food thing that he tried to take my food. Listen to me. I would've beat his ass, guys. It wouldn't be no Air Jordan now," Grant said. "It wouldn't be no six championships, I guarantee you that."

Bill Cartwright, Craig Hodges and Ron Harper also participated in The Final Dance roundtable and made light of Jordan's reputation as a tyrannical teammate.

"MJ knew who he can talk to and knew who he had to push. He was one of those guys who made you work harder because you see how he works," Harper told BetOnline.ag. "You ain't gonna talk crazy to me and don't think I'm going to talk crazy to you. He would talk to Scott Burrell and Scott wasn't man enough to stand up for who he was. You ain't doing that s**t with me."

Added Cartwright: "Let's be kind. I think that the documentary meant to be something positive. That's what I want to be. We saw really three guys - Will Perdue, Steve Kerr, Scott Burrell. Really, that's the only people I've seen. So we'll just leave it with that. I didn't see all that holding people accountable. I saw us, our guys. And these guys here, I promise you these guys are extraordinarily competitive. They're not going to put up with anything. You can tell any story you want. I didn't see it."

Grant said the documentary didn't show teammates challenging Jordan back.

"We were grown men out there. We were professionals," Grant said in the roundtable discussion. "For MJ to critique our basketball, OK, well listen, I don't think he was hard per se because the documentary didn't show that over half the guys he got on went back at him. You know damn well that I did. He wasn't difficult at all because if you stand up for yourself—and you're not Will Perdue or Steve Kerr.

I wasn't there for the second three-peat but I know some of the guys on that team"

In fact, the players felt plenty landed on the cutting-room floor.

"I felt that it could've been more about what the team did and what the players done," Harper told BetOnline.ag. "But you know I understand they gave the copyrights to MJ. So it was more like 'Come Fly With Me, Part 2.' But it was good."

Said Cartwright: "We knew it was going to be really one guy's perspective of what happened. I think everybody here would have their own perspective. It was interesting to watch. The main thing for me is being able to recognize different guys like (strength coaches) Al Vermeil (and) Erik Helland, other teammates that were out there. Just making sure that people have a clear understanding of why our team was successful. We had the best team, the best bench and at that point in time we happened to have the best player in the league. I was watching it for entertainment value mostly because I knew what happened."

Concluded Grant: "That documentary was for MJ, to be honest." *(NBC/AP)*

Barca return for Neymar doubtful

FRANCE—Neymar's former agent, Wagner Ribeiro, is not expecting a deal to be agreed in the next transfer window that will take the Paris Saint-Germain forward back to Barcelona.

A retracing of the Brazilian's steps to Camp Nou has been mooted for some time.

Ever since a record-breaking $243 million switch to France was completed in 2017, the South American superstar has been linked with a return to Spain.

Barca have made no secret of the fact they would welcome the opportunity to draft a familiar face into their star-studded squad.

Discussions with PSG have, however, proved difficult in the past and the coronavirus pandemic has further complicated matters in the present.

Even the biggest clubs on the planet, who boast the deepest pockets, are going to find it difficult to finance big-money deals in the current climate.

With that in mind, Ribeiro doubts that an agreement can be reached that takes Neymar away from his contract at Parc des Princes and back to Catalunya.

He told Fox Sports: "I think Neymar will stay at PSG because the market is different.

"The economic world of football will change."

Ronaldo reports to Juventus

In Italy, Cristiano Ronaldo reported to Juventus' training center for medical tests on Tuesday after a 10-week absence and gave the media a thumbs up when he left three hours later.

The five-time Ballon d'Or winner observed a two-week isolation period at his home in Turin after spending the lockdown in his native Portugal.

He has not been alongside his teammates since helping the Serie A leaders beat Inter Milan 2-0 on March 8, after which he flew to his home island of Madeira, Portugal.

Serie A was suspended a day later when the Italian government ordered a nationwide lockdown. The league is hoping to resume on June 13 if it can reach an agreement with the government, which has banned sports events until June 14.

MLS All-Star Game in LA canceled

In New York, Major League Soccer's All-Star Game has been canceled for the first time in its quarter-century history because of the coronavirus pandemic.

MLS All-Stars had been scheduled to play counterparts from Mexico's Liga MX on July 29 at Banc of California Stadium in Los Angeles. MLS said Tuesday that the 2021 game will take place at Banc of California Stadium, most likely against All-Stars from Liga MX.

The third Campeones Cup between the MLS and Liga MX champions also was canceled, along with the second edition of the Leagues Cup between teams from those two leagues.

MLS was stopped two games into its season in mid-March because of the pandemic. The league is considering having all 26 teams resume play with a tournament at Walt Disney World outside Orlando, Florida. *(NBC/AP)*

Brady gathers new Bucs teammates for workout

TAMPA, Fla. (AP—Tom Brady isn't letting the coronavirus pandemic—or NFL rules against players working out at team facilities—keep him from preparing for a new season with his new Tampa Bay team.

Brady gathered some of his Buccaneers teammates on a high school field early Tuesday for a throwing session. Brady wore a Buccaneers helmet and an orange jersey over his shoulder pads. The informal, players-only workout at Berkeley Preparatory School lasted two hours, according to The Tampa Bay Times.

It's not unusual for quarterbacks to organize passing workouts before training camp, but the pandemic has changed normal routines. Teams have had to rely on virtual meetings instead of traditional offseason programs as the NFL tries to make plans for a 2020 season, possibly without fans at stadiums.

Because of the pandemic, which has forced social distancing and sheltering at home as the new rules, any gathering of players is notable—especially one involving Brady, a six-time Super Bowl champion with the New England Patriots. Brady, 42, signed a two-year, $50 million contract with the Bucs in March.

After signing with the Bucs, Brady asked for phone numbers of his teammates. He apparently made use of that list to organize Tuesday's workout.

It was an encouraging sign for fans on the same day NFL teams began opening facilities to a limited number of personnel. The facilities are still off-limits for coaches and players, except for players undergoing injury rehabilitation.

AP
Tampa Bay Buccaneers quarterback Tom Brady, second left, is seen working out with other players at Berkeley Preparatory School in Tampa, Fla., Tuesday, May 19, 2020.

Center Ryan Jensen practiced shotgun snaps to Brady on the artificial turf football field.

Though he's the newcomer, Brady was in charge, according to the newspaper. Brady walked through a route with receiver Mike Evans, demonstrating for the veteran and other players exactly where to make their cuts.

Quarterbacks Blaine Gabbert and Ryan Griffin also threw passes.

Among other players attending the session were receiver Scotty Miller, tight ends Cameron Brate and O.J. Howard and running back Dare Ogunbowale.

Teams cannot organize such workouts, and the Buccaneers did not publicize Tuesday's session. There was no immediate reply from the team to a request from The Associated Press for comment on the workout.

Tuesday's session went better than Brady's attempt to work out privately at a Tampa park last month. After he was told by a security guard that the park was closed and he had to leave, Brady received an apology from Mayor Jane Castor.

49ers hopeful for training camp return

In San Francisco, 49ers fullback Kyle Juszczyk is encouraged by how productive the team's virtual offseason has been.

He believes players are able to get even more time learning the intricacies of the offense without the pressure of going out on the field to practice each day and he has enjoyed the banter and bonding across the video screens

There's one aspect that can't be replicated.

"The biggest obstacle is not being with each other on the football field, to be able to get those reps of reacting to a defender or vice versa for a defensive guy reacting to an offensive guy in front of them," Juszczyk said Tuesday. "Those are things that are hard to simulate."

Now there is at least some reason for optimism that the part of the offseason that has been put on hold in response to the COVID-19 pandemic can return in time for the Niners to be able to hold their training camp as scheduled starting in late July at their Santa Clara facility.

Gov. Gavin Newsom said Monday that if progress continues, pro sports could return in California the "first week or so of June without spectators and modifications and very prescriptive conditions."

US Open loses part of identity without qualifying

NEW YORK (AP)—The U.S. Open lost a big part of its identity.

And it has nothing to do with par.

For years, the USGA has boasted—and rightly so—that it was the most democratic of all majors. Half of the 156-man field had to go through some form of qualifying just to get a tee time.

Max Homa won at Quail Hollow last year in a Sunday that featured Rory McIlroy and Justin Rose. A month later, he had to go through 36-hole qualifying for a spot at Pebble Beach and didn't make it. The year before, Adam Scott narrowly qualified for the U.S. Open, five years and two months after he won the Masters.

Major champions. Amateurs. PGA Tour winners. Teenagers. Only the score mattered.

The USGA really had no choice but to cancel qualifying this year for the U.S. Open and the other three championships it will try to run while operating amid a pandemic.

The numbers didn't allow for it. For the better part of a decade, at least 9,000 players signed up for the U.S. Open. A majority of them would have had to go through 18 holes of local qualifying at 108 golf courses in 45 states and Canada. What followed was 36 holes of sectional qualifying at nine courses in the U.S., one each in Canada, Japan and England.

John Bodenhamer, who's in charge of USGA championships, called qualifying the "cornerstone."

But in losing the identity of being "open," at least the U.S. Open won't gain an asterisk.

Assuming the 120th edition can be played this year -- it already has been postponed from June to Sept. 17-20 at Winged Foot in New York -- the field will be stronger than ever. The winner will have passed golf's most thorough examination, unofficially known as the "toughest test in golf."

Even so, the greatest loss is hope.

Never mind that only four U.S. Open champions have had to go through qualifying over the last 50 years, the most recent being Lucas Glover in 2009.

The word "qualifier" these days conjures up images of guys rolling into a parking lot on Monday to try to get into a PGA Tour event. Glover was a PGA Tour winner who was No. 71 in the world.

Glover reached the Tour Championship last year, making him exempt for this U.S. Open. He still felt for the players who won't get a chance to qualify, his path 11 years ago.

"It takes away a little from the flavor of the true Open," Glover said Tuesday. "If I was on the outside looking in, I'd be upset. But I'm not. It's what we have to do. It stinks for the guys who won't have an opportunity."

Jason Gore, who now works for the USGA, had to go through both stages of qualifying in 2005. He made it to the final group at Pinehurst No. 2 as the No. 818 player in the world, only to close with an 84.

Even more remarkable might have been Olin Browne. He opened with a 73 in sectional qualifying in 2005—a score that felt like 80 at Woodmont Country Club in Maryland—and was about to withdraw until he thought quitting would set a bad example for his son. So he played the afternoon round. He shot 59 to qualify.

Twelve days later, he was tied with Gore going into the last round, playing in the penultimate group with Michael Campbell, who won that day (Campbell also had to qualify). Browne had one of nine scores in the 80s that day, a group that included Retief Goosen and Graeme McDowell, who would win the U.S. Open the following year.

"It goes against the grain of the declared," Browne said. "It's the U.S. Open. Half the field every year is qualifiers, and there's some great stories."

Andy Zhang got into Olympic Club in 2012 when he was 14. Tadd Fujikawa went through two stages of qualifying for Winged Foot in 2006. Michelle Wie even tried that year at age 16, missing by five shots.

Rocco Mediate was 45 when he qualified for Torrey Pines in 2008 and was one clutch from Tiger Woods on the 72nd hole from being a U.S. Open champion.

Browne questioned why the USGA would proceed without qualifying to stage four events—U.S. Open for men and women, U.S. Amateur for men and women—while canceling mid-amateur, junior and senior championships.

Everyone has bills to pay.

Still to be determined is how the USGA decides who will be exempt beyond the 50 who already are.

Most intriguing, of course, is Phil Mickelson. He has been among the most critical of the USGA with words and actions, such as swatting a moving ball on the 13th green at Shinnecock Hills two years ago.

Mickelson was at No. 61 when the world ranking was frozen in March because of COVID-19. The top 60 a month before the U.S. Open are exempt from qualifying. A player of Mickelson's stature—a five-time major champion—typically gets a special exemption. He said in February he wouldn't accept one.

Wiping out qualifying leaves nearly 100 spots to fill, and it would be hard to imagine Lefty being left out. Winged Foot in 2006 was where Mickelson made double bogey on the final hole to finish one shot behind in the only major he hasn't won.

It's already been a year hard to fathom in so many ways.

Nats opt for virtual Series ceremony

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Washington Nationals will unveil their World Series championship rings during a "virtual" ceremony to be shown on television and online Sunday—an unprecedented approach brought about by the coronavirus pandemic.

With the start of the Major League Baseball season on hold because of the COVID-19 outbreak, Nationals owner Mark Lerner said Tuesday night he hopes the plan to show off the team's hardware would provide "a moment of joy in these uncertain times."

Teams typically unveil their title rings at a home stadium packed with fans.

"We don't know when we'll all be together again at Nationals Park," Lerner said during the announcement Tuesday on MASN, the local television channel the team shares with the Baltimore Orioles.

The ring ceremony will be shown on MASN, MLB Network and online.

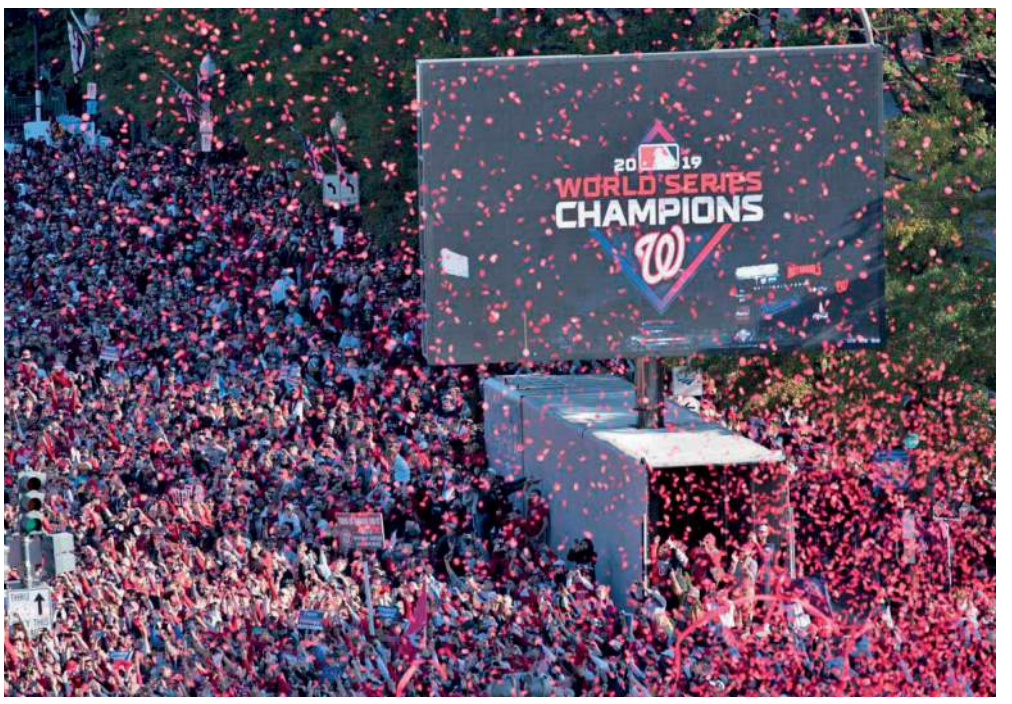
Lerner noted that the ceremony falls on May 24, now a key date in Nationals history. A year ago, Washington went into that day of the calendar with a 19-31 record before starting a turnaround that led to the franchise's first World Series appearance and championship.

Lerner also said that a documentary about Washington's 2019 season, "Improbable" will be shown in two parts on Saturday and Sunday.

Rangers to stay home

The Texas Rangers would prefer to stay home in their new ballpark instead of returning to Arizona whenever it is time to get back to spring training.

They still haven't played a game, or even had an organized workout, in their $1.2 billion stadium with a retractable roof.



AP

In this Nov. 2, 2019 file photo, confetti falls on fans as the MLB Washington Nationals celebrate the team's World Series baseball championship over the Houston Astros in Washington.

Spring training has been on hold more than two months ago because of the coronavirus pandemic, also delaying the start of the regular season. That wiped out two planned exhibition games at Globe Life Field, along with 25 regular season home games so far.

Major League Baseball owners last week approved a proposal that could lead to the season starting in July. That would be preceded by a second spring training period, and teams could have the option to do that in their home ballparks or at their spring training camps in Arizona or Florida, though there still are a lot of details to be worked out and approved by owners and players.

"Our preference would be to stay here in Texas and have spring training 2.0, or however you want to refer to it," Rangers president and general manager Jon Daniels said Tuesday. "So if that holds, then we would hold camp here in Arlington."

The team wouldn't have multiple fields available like at it complex in Surprise, Arizona, but Daniels sees the new stadium as a huge resource with plenty of advantages.

"One of the critical pieces here is being able to space people out responsibly and safely, and we're going to have as much or more space than anybody. And brand new, clean state-of-the-art facilities," he said.

The Rangers could also utilize their former home across the street, even though it was reconfigured for football and the short-lived revival of the XFL. There are two weight rooms in the new stadium, and they have another one in the old stadium, which now has a turf field that could be used for throwing programs and maybe even batting practice.

"We have more space, certainly indoor space, here. And then, when you look at the reality of the weather in Arizona ... yeah, you have 6 1/2 fields, but are you really going to use that when it's 115 (degrees) outside," Daniels said. "I don't think that the advantage of the more additional fields would have benefited us, that kind of played partially into our decision to stay here."

Manager Chris Woodward still lives in Arizona, where he was already talking about 105-degree temperatures last week when expressing his preference for workouts in Texas.

Being in Texas instead of Arizona would eliminate the close proximity to some other teams to play additional spring training games before the season. The Rangers would have to depend primarily on intrasquad games to get prepared for the season.

"This year is obviously different from any other year. Our guys know that, and I've talked to them at length about that. So anything we do is going to not be normal," Woodward said. "If they're having to face each other... I think they're going to go right after each other."

Daniels said there have been some informal talks with some other teams about a possible exhibition game or two at the end of spring training, but he's not sure those would even be necessary.

"I don't think it's all that important quite frankly. I think we'll be able to to get our guys enough live looks at each other in intrasquad (games) or live BP or different scenarios," the GM said. "It kind of falls into that category of an ideal world, great. But we're not in that situation and so it's not a requirement for us."

The only baseball at the stadium so far has been some individual and small-group workouts over the past few weeks, including All-Star slugger Joey Gallo and other players who live in the area.

There will plenty of pomp and circumstance before the Rangers play their first game, with about 40 socially distanced high school graduation ceremonies there in the next few weeks.

FLASHBACK

From Page 20

crushed the time of Kai Staal (29.50 seconds set on April 16, 2011).

Kimura qualified in the finals of the Oceania event and in the gold medal race, he eclipse his record anew after breaking the 29-second barrier, as he clocked in at he 28.94 seconds, the sixth best time in the field.

Up to this day, Kimura's 28.94 seconds is still unbeaten in the 17 to 18 age group.

Overall, Kimura owns three national records with the two others in the 100m backstroke (1:02.67/May 20, 2014) and in the 200m backstroke (2:18.04/May 22, 2014).

Besides his national marks, Kimura, who is now based in Japan, holds 10 age group records—three each in the 17 to 18 and 15 to 16 divisions and four in the 13 to 14 bracket.

Besides his participation in the Oceania Swimming Championships, the 24-year-old Kimura also represented the CNMI in the 2010 Micronesian Games in Palau, the 2013 FINA World Championships in Spain, and the 2011 FINA/ARENA Swimming World Cup in Tokyo.

TRAVILLA

From Page 20

family members, who encouraged her in every game and are still supporting her even when she has already moved to Guam.

"I'm grateful to still be playing basketball after high school and I wouldn't ever take it for granted. Also knowing that people from home are rooting for me helped me stay on track with my performance. It really leads back to my support system. My family, former coaches, and teammates helped push me through the tough days and I'd like to thank them for that," said Travilla.

Before suiting up to the Tritons, Travilla played for Mt. Carmel School, helping the Lady Knights top the Coalition of Private School Sports Association Basketball League in all her four years with the squad (MCS claimed the girls high school title for five straight seasons) She also won several individual award in the league, including three MVP plums, and represented Mt. Carmel in volleyball competitions, too.

TRITON ATHLETICS

University of Guam's Dean Blake, center, takes a shot against two Four Stars defenders.

TRITON ATHLETICS

University of Guam's Jan-Nasia Travilla pulls up for a jumper during one of their matches last season.

As for her national team duties, Travilla donned the colors of the Commonwealth in the 2018 Micronesian Games in Yap and also attended the Pacific Youth Leaders Basketball Camp in Australia in 2016 (with teammate Karleen Reyes).

Meanwhile, another former CNMI National Team member—Dean Blake—made the Tritons' top student-athlete list. Blake will receive the Sportsmanship Award in men's basketball, which had Michael Quan as MVP and Harold Gaerlan and Logan Hopkins as best defensive and offensive players, respectively.

In women's basketball, joining Travilla on the honor roll are Niah Siguenza (best offensive player), Isla Quinata (best defensive player), and Danielle Robles (sportsmanship award).

Grant, Bulls teammates fire back at Jordan

PAGE 17

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Brady gathers new Bucs teammates for workout

PAGE 18

Travilla named MVP at UoG

TRITON ATHLETICS

University of Guam's Jan-Nasia Travilla surveys the floor before making any move during one of their games in the 2019-2020 season.

TRITON ATHLETICS

University of Guam's Jan-Nasia Travilla, fifth left, joins the Tritons huddle during a break in their game against Fuetsa in the PBS Guam Women's Basketball League last year.

Flashback: Kimura breaks record twice

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Swimming Center Tsunami Saipan's Kensuke Kimura, on this day six years ago, had record-breaking performances in the 2014 Oceania Swimming Championships held at the West Wave Aquatic Centre in Auckland, New Zealand.

The then 17-year-old Kimura raced in the 50m backstroke preliminaries and timed in at 29.08 seconds to surpass the national mark (29.13 seconds) he himself registered on March 21, 2014. His old national and age group record

See FLASHBACK on Page 19

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Kensuke Kimura is seen here competing in the 100m backstroke event in a local meet at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool in Marpi in 2014.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Former CNMI Women's National Team member Jan-Nasia Travilla emerged as one of the top student athletes of the University of Guam for the 2019-2020 school year.

Travilla has been named Most Valuable Player in women's basketball by the Triton Athletics Department of UoG and is among the 17 student-athlete awardees for the shortened season. Usually, UoG holds the Student Athlete Reception to recognize the awardees, but with the coronavirus pandemic, the event has been canceled and instead winners will be receiving trophies.

The 20-year-old Travilla won't be getting her MVP trophy soon, as she is now on Saipan and was surprised with the award.

"I'm still shocked to learn I got the MVP," the Criminal Justice student said.

Travilla, according to the information provided by the Triton Athletics Department, averaged 17 points per match for UoG and had a season-high 25 markers in one of the squad's games for the 2019-2020 competition.

The incoming junior is honored to be named MVP and thankful for the opportunity to continue her passion for basketball while working on her college degree.

"I guess what led me to my good basketball performance this season was knowing that I am still able to play the sport that I am passionate about while pursuing my college education," the shooting guard said.

Travilla also thanked all his coaches and teammates and

See TRAVILLA on Page 19